Glad Tidings

January/February 2009

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When God created humankind,
he made them in the likeness of God.
Male and female he created them,
and he blessed them. Genesis 5

Cover Photo: Brian Johnston
Reflection of church in Eastern Europe

Glad Tidings

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Glad Tidings reports on aspects of the Women's Missionary Society on all levels.

Glad Tidings challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally, and internationally.

Glad Tidings through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired, and motivated to action.

GladTidings provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters, and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS or by the Editor.

Colleen Wood

From the Editor's Desk

Happy New Year! The beginning of the year is often a time to look forward and to make resolutions for a new year. We vow to eat healthier this year and to exercise more. We vow to read our Bible daily. Perhaps, we vow to learn how to say no and to slow down. The new year is also a time to look back. Radio and television shows will reflect on the best, the worst, the most moving, or the most popular moments of the past year. In this edition of *Glad Tidings*, many of our writers take a look back—a look back at their own lives.

We will hear the powerful story of Ira Mangililo, as she reflects on the changes in the lives of Indonesian women. They have journeyed far, but the journey continues. You will hear how a traffic accident caused one young woman to let go ... and let God be in control. You will also hear from a minister who reflects on what it means for each of us to be created as a child of God.

I hope as you hear the voices of these women, you will pause and reflect on your own life, your own journey. Where has God been present in your journey? How do you live as God's child? Where will your journey take you?

This year, the WMS continues to challenge you in mission. You will be challenged to raise funds for two worthwhile ministries: building a hostel for children in India, and purchasing school supplies for children in Eastern Europe. But you don't have to do it alone—spread the word and have your congregations, your families, your Sunday Schools all assist with these important ministries.

Secondly, you may be challenged to take a journey. Consider participating in the WMS Mission Exposure Tour to Malawi or Winnipeg. This is a great opportunity to experience mission first-hand, and to learn from our mission partners.

Wherever 2009 takes you, I wish you much joy and the best of all travelling companions—our God who calls you his beloved child!

Beloved Children of God

by Amanda Currie

Next week, I am going to baptize my fifth baby of the year (2008). It has been a great year for babies in our congregation of St. Andrew's, Saskatoon. Having babies in our church has necessitated the recruitment of volunteer caregivers for the nursery on Sunday mornings (which hasn't really been that hard, since most people love babies!). But having all these babies around has also prompted me to thinking theologically about these little ones.

Whenever I get to conduct a baptism, I spend some time reflecting theologically about baptism. Also, my congregation gets to hear another sermon on baptism and I encourage them all to "remember their baptism," to reflect on its meaning and significance in their lives, and to give thanks. When I am going to baptize a child or infant, I spend even more time in reflection because my practice is to meet with the child's parents and to discuss with them the meaning and significance of their decision to have their child baptized in the church.

Each time I have this conversation, I find myself emphasizing that baptism is a welcome into the Christian community. Baptism as "entrance into the church" makes sense to me and to most parents with whom I have discussed this idea. We celebrate the birth of a child. We welcome the child into our Christian community. And we promise to guide and nurture the child in the way of Christ.

I also like to emphasize the role of the Holy Spirit in baptism. I tell the parents that a sacrament is a visible sign of an invisible grace. Though I (the minister) will pour the water and speak the words of baptism, the church

believes that God is active in the baptism —pouring out blessings upon a beloved child of God.

Of course, I mention the other meanings associated with baptism, including the idea of dying and rising with Christ, and being cleansed from sin. I know that these are important aspects of what baptism is about, and they made sense to me when I was baptized as a teenager. But this week, as I spoke with a young mother and father about baptism as a washing away of sin, I turned to meet eyes with the beautiful four-month-old girl beside me. I couldn't help but reach out and let her wrap her tiny hand around my finger.

I paused in my explanation of what the church believes concerning baptism. I paused to feel her little fingers around mine. I paused to enjoy her contented smile and her wide eyes taking in my face and my attention. And I found that I could not tell her parents that she was sinful and needed to be cleansed. I couldn't tell them that because as I looked at her, I could so clearly see

God's image in her. She was wonderful! She was beautiful!

We all know that little girls and boys don't keep that perfection for long. In time, like the rest of us, they grow up to make mistakes. And at times, we know that they will turn away from God's loving path. But baptism reminds us of God's ability and desire to forgive us and to draw us back into a relationship with God. As "Living Faith" states concerning baptism, "God's grace and our response to it are not tied to the moment of Baptism, but continue and deepen throughout life." (7.6.3)

I have been reading some Celtic theology lately, and I am growing in my belief that we are all fundamentally, essentially good. We are made in God's image, created for love, to love and be loved, and to live in harmony with God, with each other, and with all of creation.

A lot of Western Christian theology has disagreed with that notion. Augustinian ideas about "original sin" have dominated the church's understanding of the nature of the human person, and theologians like John Calvin have emphasized our total human depravity. The Westminster Confession of Faith (Ch. 6, sections 2, 4) promotes the conviction that the image of God in the human was totally erased by Adam's fall: "Mankind is wholly defiled in all parts and faculties of soul and body … utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil."

The church has often convinced us by its theology, liturgy, and practice that we have fallen so far from the divine image that our essential nature is sinful. Though God's grace has been emphasized so that we are not condemned for our sins, we have spent an awful lot of energy and time convicting each other, confessing our sins, and begging for God's forgiveness. I am reminded of the words of a song by the Christian band Caedmon's Call: "I'm so thankful that I'm incapable of doing any good on my own." I used to sing along to that song, joining in the singer's thankfulness for God's amazing grace for a wretch like me.

But I can't sing that song anymore. I can't hold a baby beside the font and believe that the child is essentially sinful and in need of cleansing. I have come to believe that we are all essentially good. We are made in God's image and we have the capacity within us to reflect God's love in the world. I don't deny the reality and power of sin in our lives. We do make mistakes and we do need God's amazing grace. And yet, I think that the most important and wonderful thing that happens at baptism is that God says, "You are my son. You are my daughter. I love you. And, I am pleased with you."

So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. (Genesis 1:27)

"Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger."
(St. Patrick)

As the church, when we baptize a child, we join with God's voice in pouring out blessings upon one child who is very special to God. And we commit to keep on telling and showing that child that they are indeed the beloved of God. It's easy when they are cute little babies. Their identity as children of God is so obvious! As they grow up, it gets more challenging. They make mistakes. Sometimes, they turn away from God. Sometimes, they're not so easy to love. Sometimes, WE'RE not so easy to love. But each one of us is God's child, made in God's image; God's beloved, with the capacity to love in God's way.

I feel very blessed by the fact that there were people in my childhood who made sure that I learned my identity as a child of God. I remember really enjoying the fact that my name (Amanda) means 'worthy of love', and my parents and my church community made sure that I believed it to be true. I was (and I am) worthy of love.

There are many children and many adults in our churches and in our communities who do not know how deeply and completely they are loved by God. The media so often encourages us to feel bad about ourselves. Everywhere we look, we are being told that we don't look good enough, that we aren't thin enough, attractive enough, rich enough, nor do we have enough stuff. When the church only tells us that we are terrible, selfish, sinful people too, we fail in our mission to spread the GOOD news.

The good news is that Jesus has shown us the way to fully embrace and live in God's image. Like Jesus, we are beloved children of God and God is pleased with us. Like Jesus, we have the capacity to live and to love in the way that God intended. May God help us to embrace our true identity as beloved children of God, and may God help us to see and to celebrate God's image in each person we meet.

I would highly recommend two books that inspired my reflections on baptism:
Listening for the Heartbeat of God: A Celtic Spirituality by J. Philip Newell
Life of the Beloved: Spiritual Living in a Secular World by Henri J.M. Nouwen

Rev. Amanda Currie is a minister of Word and Sacraments at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Saskatoon; where she enjoys singing and preaching as much as she loves celebrating the sacraments.

When a Marginalized

A Look at Joshua 2:1–2

by Ira Mangililo

While writing this, I am sitting at my desk, which is located just in front of the window. As I think of Rahab's character, I lift up my eyes to see the view in front of me. I see the ocean and the Blue Mountains that look small from afar. The view is incredible and it reminds me of my country of Indonesia that is also surrounded by oceans and mountains. Because of conditions like these, most of the people there work as fishermen and farmers.

Describing the conditions of the Indonesian people, I remember I grew up living in a hill country where my grandparents and most of the people worked as peasants. I remember that in order to make life easier, tasks were divided between men and women. Men would open the new land to plant crops, such as rice, corn, and different kinds of beans and cut cisterns to water the plants. Sometimes the men would stay days in the watch tower that they built in their fields located far away from their homes. Meanwhile, women's jobs were to prepare food everyday for the whole family, produce the children, and make clothes with a traditional wave machine. Sometimes they followed their husbands to the fields to help plant and harvest the crops. Neither men's nor women's jobs were easy; there was a sense of dependency between them in order to make life bearable. In this respect, women's roles were as important as men's. However, women were not allowed to participate in public activities like community meetings. If they were there, most of their time would be spent in the kitchen to provide food and drink for their husbands.

But as life goes on, I notice some changes in the life of the people in my community. I call the type of women I describe above as the "grandmother"

Woman Speaks Back

om the Perspective of an Indonesian woman

type. When I became a little bit bigger, I saw another type of women arise in my community. I call this type the "mother" type, who is still involved in the domestic tasks, such as providing food for the family, buying cloth fabric and sewing clothes for their husband, and children, baking cakes, and of course producing children for their husband. But they also attended school and managed to get high school diplomas. They work as kindergarten teachers, government officers, nurses, and so on. They are also involved in women's organizations in their district. Indeed, they can be leaders, but only among children and women. In the public arena that involves men, these women, like the "grandmother" type, still cannot do much in the men's world.

Today, I notice another type of women appearing. I call them "my" type. Women of this type are very independent. They are used to living in an urban setting and have opportunities to get higher education. Some of them even go abroad to the US, Canada, Europe, and Australia to pursue their education. They are no longer expected to do all the household jobs because their 'open-minded' husbands are willing to be involved in taking care of the children, cooking, washing dishes, and doing the shopping. And, because of their higher education, women of "my" type are now allowed to participate in public activities. Besides being police women, teachers/lectures, lawyers, and doctors, Indonesian women these days can participate in political affairs. In July 2001, we elected our first woman president—Megawati Sukarno Putri—and in 2007, we elected our first woman governor in one of the provinces. However, there is no doubt that the women of "my" type still experience gender discrimination in many sectors of life. Even though we are allowed to work with our male counterparts in schools or offices, we are still not allowed to voice our ideas regarding the issues that are being

discussed. Women are expected to be silent because the less we speak the better it will be for us. Moreover, for most of us women, it is an unspoken rule that we must attach ourselves to our male leaders and follow their orders obediently without asking any "annoying" questions if we want to advance our careers.

Furthermore, I find it very frustrating that many strong and intelligent women—no matter how many degrees they have—are still not given opportunities to define themselves, speak for what they believe in, and determine their own futures. We are still under the shadow of our male counterparts. And this is exactly what men said about Megawati—our first woman president. They claimed that Megawati was elected not because of her capability to rule as president, but because of the charisma of her father, Sukarno, our first president. In addition, they claimed that she was used as a puppet by several ambitious men who worked behind her.

Reading Joshua 2:1–24, I see the similarity between Rahab and our Indonesian women now. In Rahab's story, she is treated as a marginalized person in her society because of her profession as a prostitute. She is the kind of woman who is socially marginalized because she offers sexual 'favours' for a fee. She is "an outcast, though not an outlaw, a tolerated but dishonored member of society." (Bird: 1997: 199–200) Her people let her live among them, but it is clear that they look down on her. She is the mocked target of people and a subject of suspicion with her king. Even so, there is something undeniably remarkable about Rahab that makes her character shine through in this story. It is her intelligence that enables her to understand the destruction that is about to happen to her people. And with her quick thinking and clever plan, she tricks the king and the spies in order to save herself and her family. Thus Rahab, an outcast in her society, proves she can master the game when it comes to saving her family's life. This story teaches us not to look down on such a woman.

Even though Indonesian women are not prostitutes like Rahab, they do share some similarities with her—Indonesian women are marginalized in a society that favours men over women. They work as hard as men in many sectors of life, but what they have done has not yet been recognized. Therefore, I think Rahab speaks to our women because she teaches us that no

one can change our fate, but ourselves. And we can only do that by speaking what is on our minds so that our existence is realized by our community.

Furthermore, Rahab shows us the importance of taking significant action to achieve our dreams, like pursuing education as high as we possibly can. This idea is profoundly applicable to our condition because I believe that our voices will be considered pivotal when they are accompanied by our academic achievements. Thus, all we need to do is to believe that we have everything that is needed to succeed and then work as hard as we can to make our dreams come true.

As I continue to sit at my desk trying to figure out how to finish this short reflection, my eyes capture four flowers that I bought from Safeway to accompany me in this little apartment while I am working to pursue my studies at Vancouver School of Theology. I feel the strong need to water these plants everyday because somehow I feel that their growth is very important to my own growth. For just as I am making sure to give them water daily to keep them alive, I also understand that I must work daily to pursue my goal—as an Indonesian woman—to be equal with men. There will be ups and downs on the road. There will be good and bad days and the bad days have the ability to take away our spirit and make us hold ourselves back from our dreams. But, just as the flowers cannot live without the water that I give them, we, as Indonesian woman, need God's guiding spirit everyday to keep us moving toward our dreams. We need support from other women who are our sisters. For just as Rahab worked so hard to save her family, every Indonesian woman working around the world should believe that what they are doing now is important—they are saving other members of their family, namely their own sisters who do not have the opportunity to do it themselves.

Bibliography: Bird, Phyllis A. Missing Persons and Mistaken Identities: Women and Gender in Ancient Israel.Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997.

Ira Mangililo is a Hebrew Bible teacher at the Faculty of Theology at Satya Wacana Christian University, Indonesia. She is currently working on her MTh at Vancouver School of Theology. Her goal is to begin a Ph.D. shortly.

Be Still and Know

by Anne Miller

I remember that it was a sunny Friday afternoon. My friend Julie and I had excitedly packed her car after school and were driving up to Camp Kintail for the Presbyterian Young People's Society (PYPS) May Camp on the long weekend. The following Saturday night was my prom, but I wasn't really thinking about that. I was too eager to get to camp and see my friends.

The last thing that I remember before waking up was navigating with the map spread out on my lap. I realized that we had been in an accident and, aware that I had been unconscious, I anxiously tried to check my memory. For some reason, I found myself repeating $E=mc^2$ in my head and somehow that reassured me that I was okay. An unfamiliar voice said that they would need the Jaws of Life to get me out and I fainted again as I heard the metal start screeching in protest.

Later, I was told what had happened. Julie had looked over at the map to see what I was pointing at, the steering wheel had turned slightly, and we drifted into the oncoming lane head on into the path of a pickup truck. The other driver swerved and the passenger sides collided.

I have always been somewhat squeamish—wanting to run from needles, fearing doctor's appointments, and trips to the dentist. The thought of medical treatments leaves me pale and it has taken a long time for me to be comfortable in hospitals, so this event should have been catastrophic. Prior to this, my biggest health issues had been getting my thumb slammed in the car door and suffering from mumps and chicken pox. Now, here I was bleeding at the side of the road.

I soon knew that somehow everything was going to be okay. God's fingerprints were all over what appeared as a tragedy.

The first person to arrive at the scene was a nurse with a cell phone who let Julie call her parents. They

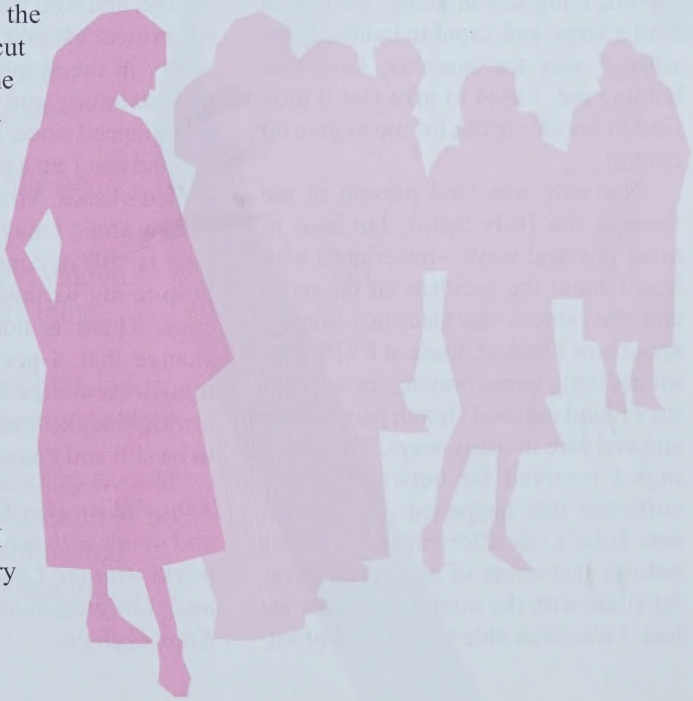
were only minutes away and arrived before the emergency vehicles to comfort her. When I opened my eyes, the person looking down at me was a graduate I knew from my high school. I believe at the time he was training to be a paramedic. His smile of relief at seeing me awake told me that I would be okay.

After a bumpy ride in the ambulance on a back board, the first nurse I saw was the mother of a friend. In my adrenaline stupor, I hardly noticed an IV going into my hand. I also felt incredibly important because the staff kept asking me questions. Later, I realized that it wasn't because I was so interesting, but because I'd had a head injury.

My X-rays showed no broken bones, just bruising. My glasses had protected my eyes from the shattered windshield and the blood was from a cut in my forehead. The young intern on call happened to be specializing in plastic surgery. He really was not bad to look at, which distracted me from the stitches he was putting in. He did such a great job that the ambulance attendant's warning that I would need surgery evaporated.

I was kept in the hospital overnight for observation and went home the next day. Julie had respiratory concerns and bruising, but was able to go home the day of the accident. Unfortunately, there was a young child in the other vehicle who had to be flown to London for a dislocated jaw. Her panicked screams in the emergency ward reminded me of just how serious this had been. She fully recovered because she was still growing. Had she been any taller, her injuries would have been far worse. God walked with her as well.

More than any of the 'coincidences' of how this happened—from how close we were to home, to how God shielded me from seeing the accident coming, to knowing the people who cared for me, to the experts along the way—was the



tangible presence of God. A calm and peace enveloped me that I knew beyond a doubt was God. I did not have to worry or do anything. Those around me took care of me and God was in control.

Years later, I attended McMaster Divinity College's Fall Retreat for faculty, staff, and students entitled "Be Still and Know." During one of the sessions, we were asked to identify one or more significant turning points in our spiritual journeys. Without hesitation I wrote down 'after the car accident.' When asked why, I wrote 'I couldn't fight it, I could only experience it—God's presence and love—and I overcame my fear.' I drew a picture of myself, lying down, gently cupped in God's large and capable hands. Even when I was unconscious, God was holding me. I used to joke that it took God to knock me out for me to give up control. .

Not only was God present in me through the Holy Spirit, but also in more physical ways—my friends who heard about the accident on the radio and who came to visit made no comment about how I looked; those at PYPS who immediately began praying for us when they found out; and church people who showed care in many ways. The blessings I received far outweighed any suffering that happened. Those who saw Julie's car afterwards could not believe that either of us got out alive, let alone with the minimal injuries we had. I was even able to go to my prom.

I wish I could say that I have never been afraid of the doctor since, or that I have always been able to let go and let God control my life. Despite this powerful experience, I still struggle from time to time. I am so grateful, though, that this happened to me. It is one of several key markers on my journey and a powerful memory I never want to lose. Possibly as never before, I truly came to understand a little better just how special I am to God. There were obviously more things God wanted me to do and I was not finished yet.

This whole Psalm reminds us of who is really in charge.

Psalm 46:10 tells us to "be still and know that I am God." This whole Psalm reminds us of who is really in charge, and who we can rely on to love us, protect us, and provide a place of safety in the storm. In the variety of mountaintops and challenges I have experienced since, I try to always keep in mind that I am a child of God, cradled in God's hands. No matter what happens or how afraid I may let myself become, God is still in control and loving me despite my weaknesses and my anxieties. There is nothing I can do to change that. I pray that in our own ministries and personal lives we can always find the time and self-discipline to be still and know.

Anne Miller is a Christian Educator and writer with her MRe. She currently works with the Centre for Clergy Care and Congregational Health out of Knox College.

Willo Douglas

by Bonnie Bamberry

I said:
Hello
My name is Bonnie
And if I seem rather faint
I have felt misunderstood
Since nineteen sixty-eight

I know my clothes are tattered
And my mind's a battlefield
My flesh is bruised and
battered
Yet this one last time I'll
yield

She took me in and fed me
She gave me extra too
Clothed me in her blue-
jean love
I thought, *Could this be
true?*

I was cared for and valued
It made every dark thing
bright
This was the proof that Jesus
Was soon to make things right

Thank God for sending angels
To help this unkind Earth to be
Help to the brokenhearted
And refuge for all like me

Trusting

By Jeanette Brimner

Last night as I waited for sleep, the anxiety and fear that had plagued me yesterday afternoon came back. But in the darkness, I sensed Jesus' presence and confided in Him all the anguish I was feeling.

That morning, the sky had been drenched with sunlight and the temperature was comfortably cool. I was entertained by hyper grasshoppers jumping out of my way as I headed to the car. The meeting I attended in town went well and when it was over, I took advantage of being in the city by going to the library.

But when I got home a telephone call brought bad news. My sister-in-law informed me that my niece, who had recently lost her husband of 51 to an undiagnosed heart ailment, had contracted flesh eating disease while being treated for cellulites in the hospital. I considered the stress, mixed with the grief my niece and her family had gone through in the weeks since her husband's death. Why had all this happened to a kindhearted, community-minded, church-going person?

A rush of negative thoughts flooded my mind. Why would God allow this to happen? Why were many selfish and materialistic people, who seldom used their talents, living trouble free lives while so many God-centred people experience heart-rending tragedies? After supper, I went to bed early so as not to infect my husband with my contrary mood and it was then that the cathartic tears began to flow. These were partially caused by regret that I had allowed my mind to flow on such a negative tangent.

Writer, Maori, advised "Turn your face to the sun and the shadows fall behind you." Recalling this I turned my gaze on Jesus and immediately felt my negativity and fears dissipate. I felt Him urging me to trust God (something I must remind myself to do often) and things would be fine. I also began recalling all the positive things that had happened to good people I know. I had not thought to give God credit for those. And deep in my heart I knew that God does not send terrible trials to people. However, he is there to ease them through their difficult journey.

"God waits on our trust …" writes John Carmody. "We can never please God, in the sense of bringing home a report

card that will puff God up. However, when we trust God with our sorest feelings, our rawest pains, we can win God's heart."

A friend of mine who will soon be celebrating her 50th wedding anniversary says, "When I get down and discouraged I just throw myself into God's arms. We honour him when we do that because He is our loving Father who loves us and can help us."

I am now continuing this article several weeks after our niece's virulent illness began. After the night I described above, I took action. I put my niece on our church's prayer list and urged my friends to pray for her. She is now recovering from her illness and is now better able to deal with her grief, but best of all her sense of humor has returned. This verifies my belief that trusting in God is always rewarded!

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me."
John 14:1 (NRSV)

Life of Peter

ANDREW
APOSTLE
BOAT
DENIAL
DISCIPLE
FISHERMAN
FOLLOWER
GALILEE
JESUS
JEWS
GENTILES
LIES
NET
PAUL
PENTECOST
PETER
ROOSTER
SAIL
SEA
STORM
THREE
WAVE

P	A	U	L	I	E	S	C	J
G	E	N	T	I	L	E	S	T
O	A	N	D	R	E	W	E	T
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F	I	S	H	E	R	M	A	N
F	E	L	P	I	C	S	I	D
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M	L	A	I	N	E	D	S	L
D	T	V	G	E	E	R	H	T
I	S	E	A	B	O	A	T	B
S	O	S	H	M	R	O	T	S
W	P	E	E	L	I	L	A	G
E	A	R	O	O	S	T	E	R
J	E	S	U	S	A	I	L	T

WMS Mission trip to Eastern Europe

October 2–18, 2008

by Druse Bryan

When you travel, especially to a place you have not visited before, there is usually one experience which stays with you when you return home—one that you revisit and savour frequently. For me, on my return from the recent WMS mission exposure trip to Eastern Europe, it is the bright, expectant faces of the Gypsy children in their classroom in their Christian school in the Ukraine.

Many other images from the trip will be remembered also. I remember the magnificence of Budapest, with its bridges, civic buildings, churches, museums, public squares, and the river Danube in every picture. Our first two days of the trip were spent in this capital city and we acted as unashamed tourists, visiting all the major attractions with our guide and historian, David Pandy-Szekeres. We fell into bed each night, our head full of dates, names, battles, and treaties and knowing we were slowly building up our historic knowledge of this long troubled area. We couldn't have had a better guide and teacher than David and throughout the trip he added to our knowledge of Hungarian history as we travelled to the various schools which he administers under the Reformed Church of sub-Carpathian Ukraine.

Hungary's history is tumultuous—invaded by Mongols, Turks, and later becoming a dual monarchy with Austria under Hapsburg rule. This dual monarchy was defeated in World War 1 and under the Treaty of Trianon, when the allies parceled out Hungarian territories, Hungary lost 68% of its land and 58% of its population. In World War 2, again allied somewhat unwillingly with Germany, Hungary recovered some of its lost territory, but with Germany's defeat in 1945 and by the Treaty of Paris in 1947, Hungary again lost all its regained territory. In 1948, the Communist Party, with the help of Soviet troops, seized control of Hungary. A reign of terror ensued, followed by a gradual easing after the anti-communist revolution in 1956. This led to the formation of a coalition government. Finally in 1991, the last of the Soviet troops left Hungary, ending almost 47 years of their military presence.

While this information may seem somewhat "off subject" to some readers,

this history lesson (in much greater detail) was given to our group by David so that we would have insights into the difficulties faced by ethnic Hungarians now living in the surrounding countries of Ukraine, Croatia, and Romania. It also gave us an understanding of the tribulations of Christians living in Hungary itself since, under Communist rule, churches and the extensive church school properties were confiscated by the state and in some instances converted into state schools. Little by little some of these properties are being returned to the Reformed Church, but in most cases nothing remains but the bare walls. The situation for the Reformed Church in the neighbouring countries is even more difficult since only a handful of the many illegally confiscated church schools have been returned to their National Reformed Church and any financial support by the host state has been minimal. Having barely survived a hostile regime for over 40 years the church has few financial resources and has sought and welcomed any help from sister churches and other sources in the West.

The main purpose of our trip was indeed to visit these churches and schools and the various projects which the PCC, PWS&D, WMS, and individual congregations and WMS groups continue to support in the region. And visit them we did!

Leaving Budapest, we travelled to Romania to visit with Brian Johnston, our lay missionary at the Protestant Theological Institute in Cluj. Over the two days we were there, we attended a worship service, met with some of the first-year students on a one-to-one basis (giving them the opportunity to use their knowledge of English), and later listened to a lecture on the Hungarian Reformed Church in Romania. The second day

there was proclaimed "Canada Day," with a special musical concert with performances by both the male choir and the newly-formed female ensemble. Never have I heard a more stirring rendition of O Canada as we heard that afternoon!

Moving on from Romania, we crossed briefly back into Hungary and then into Ukraine, into the area which used to be part of Hungary itself. Just before crossing the border we stopped at Debrecin, known as the "Calvinist Rome." The inhabitants of Debrecin converted to the 'new' faith, embraced the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century, and the town became the centre of Calvinism. Its many churches include the Reformed Great Church, an impressive building. We arrived quite late at night and the church and the immense square were beautifully illuminated. I should mention at this time that our group—12 WMSers from various parts of Canada—travelled in two small Volkswagon vans each capable of carrying six or seven passengers, plus the driver and, of course, all our luggage (and yes, once again my bags didn't arrive in Budapest with me, or in Montreal when I returned home!). Our two drivers, David and Janos, were superb—and never seemed to tire. Often in the evenings when it was dark, the drivers were the only ones awake in the van. Janos is an ordained pastor in the Hungarian Reformed Church (HRC) and lives and serves in Budapest.

Our first visit in Ukraine was to the Terra Dei Foundation Model Farm for a work day. It was a beautiful sunny day and after a presentation by the director of the farm, we were put to work picking beets from the rows and rows of beets being cultivated. We worked so quickly and well that we even had time to harvest the last of the peppers (paprika) for which the area is famous. The farmer

admitted that he had figured we would need two days to finish what needed to be done. The model farm, which the WMS has already supported with a grant of $25,000, is proving invaluable to local farmers by providing them with education and training in agricultural skills and techniques. Also, much of the produce is sent to the orphanages, schools, and senior's homes administered by the Reform Church—this ensures that fresh fruit and vegetables are available at little or no cost. It was rewarding to see the success of the project which we, in a small way, had helped to initiate.

David Pandy-Szekeres serves as Development Officer for the Reformed Church schools in the part of Ukraine which had formerly been Hungary. The language, religion, and traditions of Hungary are given priority in these schools and since they receive little or no support from the state, many of the buildings need extensive renovation as well as equipment. We had the opportunity to visit these schools, both elementary and secondary, and to meet with the students and teachers. Everywhere we went we were greeted with smiles and songs from the students. The curriculum is similar to that of schools in Canada, but we were struck with the neatness of the schools, despite some obvious signs of deterioration in some of them, and with the politeness and orderliness of the students. Those who were learning English, in addition to Ukrainian, were eager to try out their vocabulary on us.

The Hungarian Reformed Church School in the town of Nagybereg was the first HRC secondary school to open its doors in 1993 with 20 students under the Christian teacher Anna Szabo, now Anna Pandy-Szekerss. It is now a boarding school, with dormitories, cafeteria, and kitchen, and the students return home every second weekend.

Speaking with David we learned that funding for the continuation of these schools is constantly in jeopardy. With very little subsidy from the municipality or the state, the HRC has difficulty meeting the financial demands made on its funds for the upkeep and renovation of properties slowly being returned into their keeping. School supplies are badly needed, as well as funds to subsidize the tuition of students who otherwise may not be able to finish and graduate

Our travels included visits to many of the churches in all four countries covered in our trip. Some were small village churches, some much larger and more decorative, but all bore signs of love and care as the parishioners try to restore their places of worship and to rebuild their faith community. All the sanctuaries bore signs of the traditional weaving and embroidery work that is carried on by the women of the community—and in one of the schools we visited we saw the young female students at the looms learning how to carry on this traditional Hungarian skill.

We also had the opportunity to meet with several groups of women who belong to the Ladies Aid, or equivalent, in the various churches. Any dialogue with the women was, of course, carried on with David as the translator, but through him we learned that the work of the women of the HRC is much the same as is done by women in congregations around the world, namely bible study; Christian education; care for the elderly, the widows, and the orphans; meals for the school children; flowers in the sanctuary; and, one that surprised us, care of the robes of the pastor! The work of the women is slowly being acknowledged by the church and the groups are being encouraged to become more structured and communicate with

each other in a more cohesive way. Elections for district presidents were about to take place while we were there.

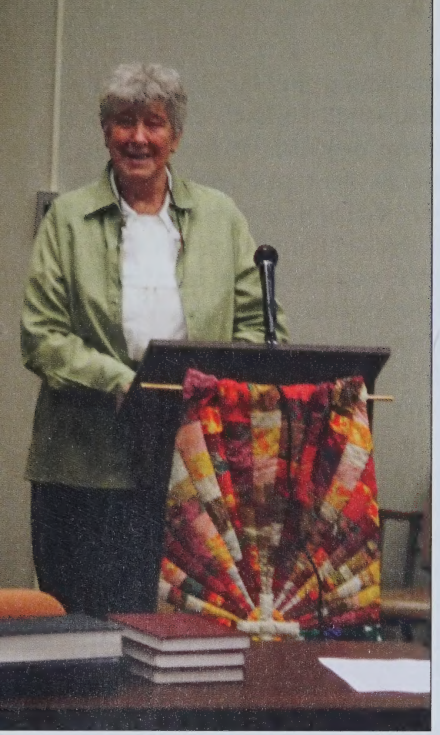
At the beginning of this report, and there is so much more that I could tell you, I mentioned the Gypsy children that we met at their school in Nagydobrony, Ukraine. We had visited the town earlier in the second week and had walked through the Gypsy community situated at the edge of the town. The poverty of the people and the state of the houses, roads, and amenities, were extremely troubling and I, for one, felt very uncomfortable and helpless. The Roma, as they are known, are largely ignored by the state and are generally regarded as troublesome and second class. Education at the state schools is available, but seldom achieved. So what a joy it was when we made a return visit to the town and went to the Christian school for the Gypsy children. The smaller children attend from kindergarten to grade three and the children in the class that we visited were bright, attentive, eager to learn, and each one proudly gave their name and their age. What a difference from the children that we had seen as we walked through the village and a testament to the work being done by the church schools. But again, funding for these schools is fragile and the long-term future is uncertain.

From Ukraine, we still had one more country to visit, Croatia, once part of Yugoslavia until it demanded independence early in the 1990s. After months of intensive fighting with the Serbian-dominated Yugoslavian army and intervention by the UN, Croatia

was declared an independent country. However, because of the checkered history of the whole area in the 20th century, there are still many ethnic Hungarians living in "Hungarian" towns near the border. In the one day that we spent in Croatia, we visited various villages and churches and saw much of the damage caused by the months of bombing and shelling. The whole area was heavily mined by the retreating Serbs causing potential hazards to the villagers and the farmers now reworking the land. Villages which were almost completely destroyed are slowly being rebuilt with financial help from the state. Churches also suffered and are slowly regrouping and reforming their faith communities.

Throughout all our experiences in Eastern Europe, we were struck by the determination and resilience of the Christians both in present day Hungary and those displaced in the bordering countries. They truly are survivors and we need to give them our support and keep them in our prayers as they seek the way ahead in spite of all the difficulties that they face. David's numerous history lessons helped us to put the struggles faced by the Hungarian Reformed Church into perspective and gave us a better understanding of the daily lives of our brothers and sisters in Christ in that part of the world.

It is my hope that all 12 participants on this trip will be invited into congregations and WMS groups to tell, both orally and pictorially, of our experiences and to invite Canadian Presbyterians to support, both financially and with prayer, the work that is being carried out in Eastern Europe.



Council Executive

From May 5–7, your WMS Council Executive met at 50 Wynford Drive. Along with the routine business, the Council reported on many exciting trips and projects, past and present, and enjoyed hearing from a few special guests.

Our first guest was Rick Fee, General Secretary of the Life and Mission Agency. Rick first thanked the WMS for all their support—innumerable cards, words, and prayers— during his recent illness. Rick feels that there is a great partnership between the WMS and the Life and Mission Agency. This was seen during the recent WMS trip to Eastern Europe and the trip by Druse Bryan, president, and Joan Smith, vice-president, to Nigeria. These trips were a great support to our staff and partners. Rick is also excited about the recent appointment of Colin Carmichael, Associate Secretary for Communication. Rick says that Colin is young and thinks in a whole new way and he is available to assist the entire PCC, including the WMS.

Our second guest was another familiar one—Pauline Brown who began her ministry in India 57 years ago. Pauline said, "This wild young woman that the WMS bet on half a century ago—that family and friends said wouldn't last a year—by God's grace is still there. Praise the Lord." She also reminded the WMS that many of the women sent to various mission projects around the world would not

have been sent by anyone else—this attests to the faithfulness of the WMS who sent them. Finally, she encouraged us and spoke of the Bhil women. The women that the WMS sent to India enabled the Bhil women to form women's groups. The Bhil women now encourage us to form groups. She told the executive, that even though we see problems, "we have been called to do this—it's a calling—he's called every one of us. How thankful we can be. How joyful we can be."

We also enjoyed hearing from Joy Randall who commented that she has been busy since her retirement and she encouraged us to keep Taiwan in our prayers as there are some concerns for the democracy of the country after their recent election.

With the participants from the WMS Eastern Europe trip just getting over their jet lag, we heard updates on the two WMS trips for 2009. WMS members can participate in a Winnipeg trip in May or a Malawi trip in early September. As well, we have the pleasure of hosting a group of Taiwanese women from October 1–15. They will work their way across the country, and visit Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg, Montreal, Toronto, and Halifax.

As we looked at the financial requests, a number stood out for me. The first was that the WMS agreed to support two Canada Youth 2009 initiatives. (Canada Youth is the national youth conference of the PCC.) We will support the bus that takes the young adults to area mission projects where they get a hands-on experience in mission work. Secondly, we will support the mission resource centre where young people can spend time drinking fair trade coffee and learning about the mission work of the WMS and the PCC.

The WMS acknowledged that although our finances are tight, young people are worth supporting!

We also offered financial support to a young person in India. We agreed to support Vivek Salathiel, a Bhil theological student, by providing him with $700 a year for his tuition from our leadership development fund. Vivek's father, who was a pastor, is deceased.

Another exciting financial decision was the formation of the Giollo Kelly Memorial Leadership Fund, using funds left to the WMS by Giollo. This fund will provide financial assistance to lay people in the PCC to attend a leadership event or to take a course.

As the synodical representatives spoke, we were given some ideas that might help other groups. For example, groups can consider twinning with another group. (In Jobat, larger groups twin with smaller congregations to help them develop a women's group.) The groups can meet occasionally, so even if members cannot go to presbyterial meetings, they can still connect with other WMS members. We also heard of a synodical where a small committee provides congregations that do not have a WMS group with all the WMS mission information.

Finally, we heard from our president. Druse Bryan has been travelling a lot—both within Canada and internationally. She attended the Women's Guild International Conference and Triennial Gathering of The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria in Abakaliki. While there she was encouraged by their advocacy. Druse challenged each of us to get the message of the WMS out, and to invite others to join us, if not as members, then as supporters of mission.

The full WMS Council will meet from May 3–6 at Crieff Hills, Ontario, to explore the theme, Opportunity Knocks.

Together we can!

Our President, Druse Bryan, along with the WMS Council, invites everyone to raise funds for these two worthwhile projects.

Buy a Brick for Jobat Hostel

In India, the students at the Jobat Christian School who cannot return home each evening after class, because of the distances, have to stay in the hostels on the school property—one for the boys and one for the girls. When our WMS group visited the school in February they were shocked at the rundown, inadequate facility for the children—nothing but an old bare concrete building with no furnishings, little ventilation, cold in February and very hot in the summer. Something needs to be done!

Let's take ownership of this worthwhile project and raise funds to build a new hostel at the Jobat Christian School.

> $25 will buy a brick to build a new hostel at the Jobat Christian School—a rough estimate is that it will take about 4000 bricks!

School Supplies for Eastern Europe

Since 1992, the Reformed Church in Eastern Europe has been working hard to reclaim land and church buildings and to re-establish its school system that was lost in the communist era. The buildings are in desperate need of repair, updated equipment, and school supplies. Your gifts will help our partner church provide students with skills and hope for the future.

Let's help build a brighter future for the children and youth in Eastern Europe!

$15 buys school supplies for one elementary school student for one year

$25 buys school supplies for one secondary school student for one year

Donations can be sent to:
Women's Missionary Society
50 Wynford Drive
Toronto ON M3C 1J7
Please mark that your donation is for School Supplies for Eastern Europe or Bricks for Jobat Hostel.

Margaret Mullin
Winnipeg Inner City Missions

I just came off of a six-day wake and funeral with seven church services each from two to five hours long and I still managed to go into work at the mission for six hours a day to keep up with the email, mail, phone, and the absolutely necessary administrative stuff.

The young man who died was 25 years old. His dad and dad's family are working people and several members of the family are Christian. His mom and her family are mostly involved with street gangs and those who are not have nothing to do with the church. Some of the family members believe in the Traditional Aboriginal stream of Spirituality. The Christians and the Traditionalists in the family do not see eye to eye.

The young man who died stayed out of the gang, got his grade 12, was working, and he was in a long-term monogamous relationship and a devoted father of two young children. You go figure! *Why do the good die young?*

With the gang connection, there was no place that would hold the wake for fear of the opposing gangs descending upon them and also for fear that the gang-involved members would attend. So ... at their request ... in steps 'Super Rev.' One of his aunts by marriage works for me, another aunt lives at the Anishinabe Place of Hope (APOH), and his only living grandparent comes to our church, so I know we have to help. That means we will have people in our building 24 hours a day for those six days. And we do—anywhere from 40–350 in the building and on the property.

The young man died on Saturday, October 18 at 3:30 a.m. from natural causes related to his heart. Later that day, Saturday evening, the large immediate and extended family (100 people), gathered and wanted me to have a service. On Sunday evening, they gathered again. This time 150 attended and they wanted another service—a prayer service.

On Monday, the body was finally released and brought to Anishinabe Fellowship Centre (AFC). On Thursday, we left for the cemetery. From Monday to Thursday, there were three evening "wake" services with about 200 people at each service, and for the funeral service on Thursday afternoon, 350 people were in attendance. The rest of the time, some family members always stayed with the body. We had to have a staff member present all the time. We had all put in some long hours that week and Susan, our social worker, and I stayed overnight at APOH in the emergency suite to be close if trouble brewed.

On Thursday evening, after the wake and funeral were over, the Christian side of the family wanted another service to celebrate the fact that the young man's dad had accepted the Lord during one of the wake services. That night, there were seven gun shots that rang out just behind the AFC. That sure caused a stir!

Now picture this ... the gang members frantically sent someone to get me because they were 'nervous' about the gun shots. They insisted that all the women, children, and most of the men should get inside the AFC building because it was not safe to be outside. And, where did they want me? Outside with three of the men who had no criminal records to monitor the situation and talk with the police. There I was with no shoes and no jacket (I ran over from APOH when I heard the shots.), and they wrapped me in a blanket and asked me to stay outside with them—then they stood behind me! "We got your back Rev.," they said. Easy for them—all that was behind them was the wall of the building. We never did find out who fired the shots, but when things quietened down in the neighbourhood they loaded their women and children in their SUVs and took off saying, "It's getting too wild down here for us." Some of the family did stay to make sure I had the AFC building locked and was back inside APOH before they left.

The next day, Saturday, I was a presenter at the first Urban Youth Institute at First Presbyterian Church, Winnipeg. I needed to arrive at 8 a.m. to set things up and join the leadership team for prayer before the day started. Only by the Spirit of God did I survive it at all!

Despite the lack of sleep and the safety issues, it really was a beautiful week! Being trusted by this family (the Christians, Traditionalists, and gang members) and helping them all to show respect for each other and deal with their grief together was an honour. That, followed by a day with urban youth open to discovering the meaning of Christian mission in the inner city, and I was left reinvigorated to continue spreading love and hope, all in the name of Christ!

Brian Johnston
Protestant Theological Institute, Cluj, Romania

I am pleased to report that all went well in our excursion to Oradea in Western Romania last weekend. The

Overseas Staff Birthdays

February
19 - Jae Lee, South Korea
21 - Bill McKelvie, Pakistan

April
11 - Sean David Allison, Cameroon
17 - Peter Daniel Pandy-Szekeres, Hungary

Opening of photo exhibition with singer Mike Abigel

choir had to work hard to prepare as five first-year students joined our ranks at the beginning of October, and I am proud to say that they rose to the challenge admirably. I must also express my appreciation to the older students who assisted them in learning the new repertoire.

After singing in the morning worship at Olaszi Church, the choir members had to dismantle my photo exhibition (Romanian Reflections) which was then transferred to the more modern Rogerius Church. The choristers performed in the afternoon service which was followed by the opening of the "new" exhibition.

A special thank you to the pastors at both churches for their co-operation in hosting this event and for the excellent hospitality provided.

It was also a pleasure to host twelve ladies from the WMS in Romania for three days as part of their tour to Eastern Europe focusing on the Hungarian Reformed Church. The tour started and ended in Hungary but also included Ukraine and Croatia.

Both my students and I appreciated this visit which gave all of us an occasion to be encouraged by each other's faith and to continue with the work that God has called each of us to do.

Zoltan, a fourth-year student

WMS group in front of an old house in the village of Kide

Book Reviews

***Self Talk, Soul Talk*, written by Jennifer Rothschild**

Reviewed by Cheryl Steeper

As I read through the first chapter of this book, I found myself nodding my head and thinking, yes Jennifer, I too have been there. Yes Jennifer, I have felt exactly the same way. Yes Jennifer, that sounds just like me. No need to read on when everything has been explained so well. All I had to do was think positive thoughts and all would be okay. Not so. There is so much more to this text than positive thinking. With its spiritual approach, this book helps us as we deal with issues of self-esteem, times of doubt, or feelings of discouragement.

As we get into the book we read, "We probably never completely erase old memories, forget old thoughts, or wipe away former self talk." Then, we later go on to read, "You will see that soul talk is faith's companion, not its replacement. Soul talk cannot be a replacement for prayer either. Talking to your Father in heaven is never enough to bring healing to your issues. When soul talk is independent of a relationship with God, we are destined to be frustrated by our own human limitations."

The Biblical references throughout and the deeper connection it brings to our source, beckon us to rethink our negative thoughts, take another look into our souls, and love one another as God intended us to do.

This book is a keeper for my library and a wise choice for yours.

***Annie's War*, written by Jacqueline Levering Sullivan**

Reviewed by Cheryl Steeper

Jacqueline Levering Sullivan's book, *Annie's War*, reaffirms that God has a purpose for each and every one of his children. I believe that he speaks to Annie's heart through the voice of one familiar to her, Harry S. Truman, 33rd President of the United States, and sends a guardian angel in the form of Miss Gloria Jean Washington. Annie's grandmother's deep abiding love completes the recipe that brings a pleasant taste to Annie's young life.

Mr. Truman shows Annie that through the hardships people face in their lives, they can learn valuable lessons and that most people are basically good folk. Truman says, "Sometimes it takes seeing things from the other fellow's point of view."

Those words of wisdom help Annie piece together the tragic events of her life and gave her courage to stand up for what she truly believed in. Although she seemed to have no problem standing up for herself, her energy needed to be channeled in the right way.

In the end we see that a little child can lead them. Miss Gloria states,

"People come into our lives at a particular time for a reason." Indeed, Annie's life and time had a reason.

Although this book is recommended for children 8–12 years old, I think this delightful story is wonderful for adults as well.

***Heavens to Betsy, Earth to Betsy,* by Beth Pattillo**

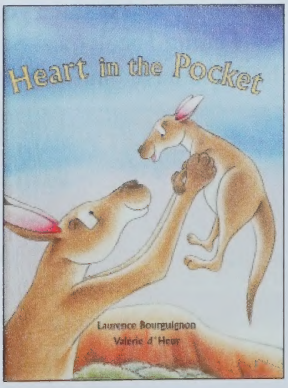
Start your year off with a fun read that might even have you laughing out loud! Betsy is the minister of a downtown mainline church, and the church is struggling. She has passion and guts, but her life is full of bumbles and fumbles. Her church has challenges too. Many of us will appreciate the challenges her church faces with mounting bills and decreasing attendance. In her ministry, Betsy is faced with many decisions, and there seems to be no good answers, just a number of 'lousy' options.

Betsy's personal life is filled with as many challenges as her church's crumbling books. She tries to be the minister she feels the church wants: she tries to be the woman she feels her best friend, David, wants her to be; and she tries to find out exactly who she is and what she wants out of life. She is a young woman trying to find happiness and often her life seems to only have 'lousy' options as well.

But the Betsy books are certainly not books of doom and gloom. They offer great humour and delightful irony. They reminded me that following a dream and your heart really is the only way to go … even if you are doing it with toilet paper attached to your shoe! These books would be an enjoyable read for anyone, and would make a great gift for a young woman in your life as she too struggles to find herself in her career, in family, in faith, and in love.

***Heart in the Pocket*, written by Laurence Bourguignon, illustrated by Valerie d'Heur**

This lovely children's book is the perfect addition to any young child's library. It is the story of a young kangaroo who is about to leave his mother's pouch. It takes a lot of encouragement before he finally makes the jump. This is a great book to remind us that we all need to take those first steps. And even as we venture, we know we are never along.



I would suggest this book for 3–6 year olds.

Forward in Faith

Christian greetings!

Through our Leadership Development Fund, the WMS has enthusiastically supported students from our partner churches. We are presently supporting the following students, each in the amount of $5,000 per year. Both of these students are also receiving grants from International Ministries through our givings to *Presbyterians Sharing* ...

- A grant for three years (2007–2009) for Mr. I-bi Chuan, an aboriginal student, who graduated in 2005 from YuShan Theological Seminary in Taiwan. He has almost completed his MDiv at Vancouver School of Theology. He has done very well and has now been offered a place in the Ph.D. program at VST. On completion of his doctorate, Ibi has been offered a teaching position at YuShan. Ibi and his wife May have one daughter. They are both with him in Canada.

  Ibi sends the following message to members of the WMS:
  I would like to express my utmost gratitude for what you have given. Thank you so much for helping me. I appreciate your hard work and time and all you have done for me. I am so grateful.

- A grant was approved for Angela Jin of China to study at Knox College in a doctorate program for at least four and possibly five years. Angela returned to China after completing two years. She remained in China for two years to do research and has now returned to Knox College to resume her formal studies for the next two or three years. Angela is being prepared for a teaching position at Nanjing Theological Seminary on completion of her Ph.D. Angela and her husband have one 20-month-old son. He is with her in Canada.

Scholarships are just one way that the WMS is able to support partner churches in the education of their leaders. I am reminded of what Dr. Deborah Tezlo's contribution has made at Jobat Christian Hospital. She received assistance from the WMS many years ago for her nurse's training, her Doctor of Medicine degree, as well as her post-graduate studies in Obstetrics and Gynaecology. Dr. Tezlo has recently retired as Superintendent of the Hospital but continues to do patient care.

Our mission dollars are being well spent.

Wilma Welsh, Treasurer

The gifts you plan for today can leave a lasting legacy for future generations and help shape the kind of church your children and grandchildren will inherit:

- A bequest can help ensure that your congregation will have a vital youth ministry for generations to come,
- A gift of stock can provide bursaries for ministers who will serve the church of tomorrow,
- A gift annuity can offer life-changing mission experiences for future leaders of both church and nation,
- A life insurance policy can provide emergency relief for victims of disasters that haven't even happened yet.

The future is in your hands!

For more information on how your gifts can help shape the future contact:

The Planned Giving Office
The Presbyterian Church in Canada
50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, ON M3C 1J7
1-800-619-7301
www.presbyterian.ca/plannedgiving

Planting seeds of hope. For generations to come.

Synodical

Alberta and Northwest Synodical was pleased to have Wilma Welsh visit us. She went to Lethbridge, Calgary, Olds, Edmonton, Grand Prairie, and Spirit River. Wilma spoke about "Together we can—buy a brick for Jobat." With her usual passion for mission, Wilma encouraged everyone to buy a brick. We are thankful that she gave so willingly of herself for the WMS.

Marg Befus

A successful women's weekend was held at Camp Christopher in **Saskatchewan** from September 5–7. The theme, "Threads of Friendship," was so appropriate as 35 women from across the province met old friends and made new ones.

We started Friday with a potluck supper. Food, hugs, and warm hands of friendship were offered to all. Everyone registered, chose their beds, and signed up for their turn at kitchen duty. Angie Bugg showed a film entitled, "The Story of Stuff," which emphasizes that we all have too much stuff. The evening ended with devotions, music, and singing.

Saturday began with a wonderful breakfast, all the more wonderful when it's been prepared for you and you're not on kitchen duty! Angie gave us food for thought on the amount of energy we use, and our Bible study focused on women in the Bible. Lunch followed and then free time for crafts, a guided nature walk, canoeing, resting, and preparing skits. The day ended with a wonderful supper, and a fabulous talent show.

Sunday came—bright and beautiful. Everyone hurried to clean up the camp and get back to the lodge for breakfast and communion. A group picture, one last meal, and we all headed home, spiritually refreshed and rejuvenated.

Adele MacDonald and Donna Brown

Presbyterial

About 60 members gathered for the Fall rally of **Bruce-Grey Presbyterial** at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Hanover, on October 2 with the theme, "The role of laypeople in leading worship." Sandra Barker, president, chaired the meeting, and Eunice Bosomworth, on behalf of St. Andrew's, welcomed the group. The program began with worship led by members of Dromore WMS.

Reports highlighted the knitting project, amd we can now add "Izzy" dolls to our knitting repertoire. In Malawi, there are few toys and mission staff have found that grieving children respond to these dolls during counselling sessions. Many of the children of Malawi have lost one or both parents to HIV/AIDS.

Esther McGibbon gave us highlights of some of the books for sale at the

book table. Our speakers—the Rev. Donald MacKay and the Rev. Marion Barclay MacKay—described their work in Ghana. Donald and Marion assisted in the training of laypeople at the Nsaba Lay Training Centre. When students finish training at the Nsaba Centre, admission to Trinity Theological College at Legon is within their grasp.

Our thanks to the MacKays for a well-planned presentation!

"Our Past, Our Present, Our Future" was the theme for **Maitland Presbyterial**, held on September 29 at Knox Presbyterian Church, Kincardine. There was a fun time of fellowship and delicious desserts, served by the Knox ladies, before the meeting. There was a good turnout from all the various WMS groups.

President Joanne Lennips constituted the meeting with prayer, and the Rev. Susan Samuel welcomed everyone to Knox Church. Melanie Milne, accompanied on the piano by Miriam Barrie, led the group in a beautiful selection of hymns. The worship time, "Walking in the Way," was taken from Deuteronomy 10:12–15.

Our speakers, Lorraine and Hugh Clugston from Wingham, spoke about their educational trip to the beautiful countries of Ireland and Scotland. They related the beginning of Celtic Christianity and the story of St. Patrick by showing an enlightening PowerPoint presentation. The hymn, "God Be With You," followed by prayer, closed the meeting.

Diane Osborne

Huron-Perth Presbyterial held their Fall rally in St. Mary's on September 15. The Rev. John Fraser, minister of St. Mary's, and Barbara Tubb, president of St. Mary's WMS, welcomed us.

Vice-president, Mary Duffin, led the worship service beginning with the WMS purpose statement, and Bernice Richards gave the opening prayer. Nancy Rothwell, Grace Rothwell, Adelinde Sacherow, and Rhea Tuer gave an excellent presentation of Knox

The Paris Presbyterial held their Fall meeting on September 14th at Central Presbyterian Church, Brantford, with Rev. Donald and Rev. Marian Barclay-MacKay as their guests for the afternoon. Pictured are Donald MacKay, Gloria Wasacasa, Susie Strickler, and Marian Barclay-MacKay.

Stratford's mission for cancer patients. They described their display of wigs, hats, scarves, and prayer shawls that are available from their Wigs and Accessories Room.

Before we enjoyed our brown-bag lunch, Ruth Hart reviewed several books from her display from The Book Room and Marlene Starkey said grace.

The afternoon program began with a singsong, led by Barb Tubb, with Eunice Bisset at the piano. Listowel Wallace WMS gave the devotions with Nancy Schneider and Betty Elliott taking part.

John Fraser introduced the guest speakers, the Rev. Donald MacKay and the Rev. Marion Barclay MacKay. In Ghana, their main task was to train lay workers to lead the worship services in small churches. Church services could be held in school rooms, sanctuaries, or open fields. Donald and Marion were dressed in the colourful Ghanian Kinty cloth. We also learned that in Ghana, each women's fellowship group has its own fabric print so the various groups are identifiable.

Avonton WMS received the offering which was dedicated by Evelyn Matthison and Bernice Richardson gave the registration report. Jean Sangster, Bayfield, reported on Pennies for Patrick. Ruth Dewar gave courtesy remarks and Lois Horne gave the closing prayer. The meeting closed with the hymn, Who's Going to Tell the Story.

Ruth Laing

On a beautiful June day, 25 WMS members of **Essex-Kent Presbyterial** travelled by bus to Camp Kintail to enjoy a day with Rev. Theresa McDonald Lee and camp staff. The bus was packed with items from the camp "wish list" and other donations.

Everyone was impressed with the warm welcome in song, interesting

Works of Art from Barrie Presbytery

conversation, tour of the camp, and the guidance from the staff in making a creative craft. The highlight of the day, was worshipping in the woods with Rev. Theresa leading the service.

All agreed it was a wonderful day!

Sarnia Presbyterial held an old fashioned tea party, with hats and gloves, at St. Andrew's, Sarnia, on May 23, with approximately 70 in attendance. After the tea party, Joan Wagner, president, opened the meeting with welcoming words and prayer.

The theme was, "Honouring Women of the Past," and Anne Yee Hibbs gave a brief history of the WMS. Each disbanded auxillary was then called to the front to give a brief summary of the group and be presented with a certificate. We followed this with a prayer, and Evelyn Shaw singing, "Thanks be to God."

Then the delegates from synodical each presented their reports. Synodical was in Owen Sound and the theme was, "Making Connections." There were 170 registered with 10 guests; 24 came from Sarnia Presbyterial. Marilyn Rawson, 1st vice-president, reported on council. The theme was, "Ripples of Renewal," and there were 60 in attendance. Everyone who went to these events, felt they were truly uplifting.

The meeting closed with a hymn, a prayer, and the Mizpah blessing.

Barrie Presbyterial's Fall gathering celebrated the theme, "Art as a Means of Grace," on October 18. Recognize the theme? Carolyn Boyer wrote an article with the same title in the May/June 2008 *Glad Tidings*. She also headed-up this great day at St. Andrew's Church, Barrie. Sarah Chanko, Mary Helen Garvin, Christine Gibbens,

Carolyn Boyer leads a workshop for Barrie Presbyterial

Margaret Robertson, Laura Ruttan, Reta Tanner, and Carolyn Boyer led hands-on workshops.

We also enjoyed a walking tour to MacLaren Art Centre, viewing Sister Wendy Beckett's DVD, *A New Pair of Eyes*, and a delicious lunch prepared by St. Andrew's WMS. We were ministered to in Communion by the Rev. Margaret Robertson, of Elmvale Presbyterian Church, who brought together such a meaningful service (as we sat at our tables) 'Art as a Means of Grace'.

Sixty women, young and old, WMS and non-WMS, attended this vibrant day. Many thanks to Carolyn, and all the leaders, for this rich day. And for those who missed it, Carolyn Boyer would be open to invitations to conduct other workshops of this type.

June Campbell

St. Andrew's-Pringle WMS, Brampton, hosted the **Brampton Presbyterial** Fall rally on October 4 with almost 50 in attendance.

Following registration and a light breakfast, the group was welcomed by the Rev. Wes Denyer. The Rev. Marion Barclay MacKay and the Rev Donald MacKay spoke of their work in Ghana. Marion and Donald gave a very interesting presentation of their life and ministry in Ghana. Following the presentation, Carolyn Jones and Colleen Wood brought greetings from synodical and national WMS staff respectively. The day also included a book table, a delicious lunch, singing, and a business meeting.

Crieff Hills Community was the destination for **West Toronto's** Fall rally on September 27. Although sunny weather preceded and followed the outing, the actual day was overcast with morning drizzle. However, it didn't hold back the 45 people, including women of various ages and one man,

At Crieff, Rev. Lynda Reid illustrates how bright colours draw the eye into the centre of a mandella with help from (left to right): Geeta Pawankumar, Sue Cox, Eva Osborne, Lynda, Carolyn Jones, Marjorie Mootoo, Sandra Heathfield, and Cathy Laboni.

who attended. The theme was "Journeying." We began with refreshments as we gathered for our opening worship, followed by singing, and an explanation of the day.

Participants had a choice of walking the labyrinth, a meditative prayer walk, or an indoor Bible study on "journeying" with *mandelas* to colour. Arrangements were also made for a 'prayer walk' by car for those who could not walk the distance.

A lively singsong was held prior to a delicious lunch, and the outing closed with worship and the singing of a hymn written especially for the day.

For many, it was their first visit to Crieff and they were very impressed with the beautiful setting. It gave them time away from their busy lives to relax and quiet time to talk to and listen to God. The fellowship, the setting, the activities, and the food, all contributed to a memorable day.

Diane Osborne

The theme for the Fall meeting of **East Toronto Presbyterial**, held at Trinity Presbyterian Church on September 20, was, "From Confession to New Relationship: Living our Covenants with Aboriginal People."

Following a time of fellowship and refreshments, the women enjoyed singing a few favourite hymns led by Katherine Allen and Anna Cook.

The president, Marjorie Ross, welcomed everyone and conducted a time of worship, pointing out how our fears and inhibitions can keep us back from the joy of life and that we should trust that God will lead the way.

The guest speaker was Lori Ransom, Healing and Reconciliation Animator,

who works for The Presbyterian Church in Canada helping church members begin the process of reaching out to Aboriginal people. Lori told us about events that have taken place with encouraging results. She encouraged each of us to become informed and involved.

Marjorie Ross expressed our appreciation to the Trinity women and closed the meeting with prayer.

Eleanor Keith

On September 20, 64 women and men from the **Lindsay and Peterborough Presbyterial** gathered for the annual Autumn Adventure held at Elim Lodge. The Rev. Dr. Ronald Wallace, Associate Secretary of International Ministries, assisted by Mrs. Wallace, introduced the theme "Mission Not Impossible." He noted that our mission efforts are designed to address four components—evangelism, church development, relief/development, and justice. International Ministries is responsible for 26 missionaries in 15 countries using the partnership approach. This flexible approach lets us meet specific needs in each area. For instance, we have three people working with churches, schools and health projects in Hungary and Romania; and in Guatemala, a nutrition coordinator works with the indigenous women of the Fraternidad of Maya Presbyterials. As well, International Ministries works with Presbyterian World Service and Development.

As well as the interesting talk by the Rev. Dr. Wallace, everyone appreciated the music of Steven Baric, organist at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Cobourg; the opening worship by the Peterborough presbyterial members, Joy Randall and Cecilia Morris; the wonderful book display hosted by Grace Kim from The Book Room; the delicious lunch at Elim Lodge's dining room overlooking Pigeon Lake; and the closing worship service presented by the Lindsay presbyterial members. We were also pleased to have the Rev. Sarah Kim as our guest.

Mark September 26, 2009, on your calendar for the next Autumn Adventure at Elim Lodge. Be challenged with new goals, refreshed in spirit and, immersed in nature's beauty.

Brockville Presbyterial held their Fall rally at St. Andrew's, Spencerville, on September 23. The Rev. Donald MacKay and Rev. Marion Barclay MacKay joined us and shared their work with International Ministries, in partnership with the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. We learned much from them about their ministry, and the people, country, clothing, language, and flag of Ghana.

Following deputation, they will return to their lives in Canada. Rosemary Rutley thanked the couple for bringing their story to us and for taking part in the worthwhile work of mission and she wished them well in their future service.

Donna Wilson

The Fall meeting of **Montreal Presbyterial** was held on September 27 at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Huntingdon, Quebec. June Tedd gave greetings; Linda Gerry gave the meditation on the theme, Focus on Mission; and president, Genevieve Holding constituted the meeting. Carol Bye played the beautiful organ and piano, and Jean MacDonald spoke to us about her trip to India, showing her pictures and mementos.

After lunch, the Côte de Neiges ladies led a hymn sing. Our guest speaker, Colonel St. Onge of the Canadian Bible Society, spoke on why the Bible is important in the world today. It was an enjoyable day.

Lorna Smith

Local

In a short ceremony on April 28, Tori Smit presented our past president, Betty Adkin, with an Honorary Life Membership Certificate. Hilda Peterson had the privilege of placing Maude Dubeau's, who is Betty's mother, pin on Betty who served as president of Knox WMS from 2000–2007.

A number of ladies from Knox Presbyterian Church, Waterloo have been knitting prayer shawls after reading about this project in *Glad Tidings*. We have sent prayer shawls to Flora House in Winnipeg and are currently giving them to members of our church in need of support and to Freeport Hospital in Kitchener and Hopespring, a support centre for cancer patients in Waterloo. We are also knitting pneumonia vests for India.
Knox Presbyterian Church ladies stand beside their prayer shawls and pneumonia vests: Back row: Jean Shantz, Dorothy Aitken, Heather Purdy, Lynelle Purdy, Peggy Bain, Eleanor Larter
Seated: Elizabeth MacDonald, Anne Blair

Circulation News

Congratulations Katherine

At the May Conference of the Business and Professional Women's Clubs (BPW) of Ontario, Katherine Allen was one of three recipients of a Leadership Award. To receive this award, letters of recommendation were received from a few members of the WMS Council Executive and BPW. The award is based on the BPW membership model which can be found on www.bpwontario.org. Katherine received this award for her personal development and leadership skills in her own club, in her work, and in her community.

At WMS Council Executive in November, the Editorial Committee had a positive meeting.

First, the committee appreciated the groups that took the time to discuss and return the survey that was included in the *Glad Tidings*' summer mailing. The survey collected information regarding the audio version of *Glad Tidings*. Currently, *Glad Tidings* is provided on cassette tape for the hearing impaired. The committee is in no rush to change to a CD version, but we know that this change will eventually happen due to technology. We will work to make sure that we meet the needs of all subscribers and non-subscribers in your congregation.

The committee spent a fair amount of time talking about promotion. The committee is looking for ways to promote the magazine to non-WMS members. How do we encourage others to subscribe to the magazine? We also wondered if the *Glad Tidings* secretaries were able to make use of the bulletin subscription form by including it in the Sunday bulletin.

We remind you that it is never too late to promote *Glad Tidings* as you can subscribe anytime during the year. We also provide complementary copies of *Glad Tidings* for promotion. (We used to provide 50 copies, but due to the cost, we will now send up to 20 copies.)

Please, help us to get the word out—*Glad Tidings* is for everyone!

PASS ME ALONG:

Sharing your *Glad Tidings* is a great way to promote the WMS, and to promote *Glad Tidings*! When you are finished with your copy, encourage …

A young adult to read, Be Still and Know (p. 12)

Your church librarian to read, Book Reviews (p. 34)

A family with a recently baptized child to read, Beloved Children of God (p. 4)

Announcement

Coming and Going

We send our best wishes to Mary Taylor on her "real retirement." Mary retired briefly from The Presbyterian Church in Canada, but came back to serve the WMS as our Financial Officer. She has worked faithfully with the WMS for the last five years and her friendly presence will be missed in the office. We wish her well.

With Mary's departure, we are pleased to announce that Elza Furzer will be joining the WMS staff. Again, Elza is no stranger to the office, having served The Presbyterian Church in Canada for many years. We welcome Elza to the staff and look forward to working with her. She brings her financial experience and skills to the position and also a great sense of humour.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Marilyn Hope
St. Andrew's WMS,
Barrie, ON

Marjorie Rea
Presbyterian Women,
Knox, Glenarm ON

Eileen Ivison
Agnes Fletcher
Mary McKenzie Evening
Auxiliary of Valetta
Presbyterian Church,
Merlin, ON

Mary Copeland
St. Andrew's WMS,
Owen Sound, ON

Mrs. Letitia (Leta) Jordan
Fraser, Tottenham, ON

Janet Corrigan
Helen Young Auxiliary,
Paris Presbyterian
Church, Paris, ON

Mrs. Ellen March
St. Andrew's Presbyterian
Church, Picton, ON

Birdie Alice Lucille
Robinson
Port Perry, ON

Miss Brenda Lavalee
Mrs. Thiry Staye
Mrs. Sadie (Nellie)
Miller
Lochwinnoch WMS,
Renfrew, ON

Sarah Agnes Gordon
Mrs. Kellsie McLeod
Fairview Presbyterian
WMS, Vancouver BC

Mrs. Helen Patrick
West Point Grey,
Vancouver, BC

Mrs. Gerda Kuehn
Weston Presbyterian
Church, Weston, ON

Helen Daugherty
St. Andrew's,
Wingham, ON

Janey Roberts
Knox WMS,
Guelph, ON

Names for In Remembrance can be sent by post or email. Please ensure names are typed or clearly written, and include your WMS group name (or congregation) and location.

Then justice will dwell in the wilderness,
and righteousness abide in the fruitful field.

Isaiah 32:16

PWS&D is working with partners around the world to bring new futures of hope for those in need.

You can help! Please support PWS&D.

Presbyterian World Service & Development

The development and relief agency of
The Presbyterian Church in Canada

www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd
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Glad Tidings
March/April 2009

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Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

Luke 24:12

Glad Tidings

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CIRCULATION MANAGER
KATHERINE ALLEN

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Glad Tidings reports on aspects of the Women's Missionary Society on all levels.

Glad Tidings challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally, and internationally.

Glad Tidings through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired, and motivated to action.

GladTidings provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters, and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS or by the Editor.

Colleen Wood

From the Editor's Desk

I love home. Whether it was walking home from school as a child to the smell of my mom's fresh cheese bread ... coming home from university to a home that I had never lived in, but still knowing it was home ... or bringing my new son home from the hospital three years ago, there was always something about coming home. Home is familiar. Home is warm. Home is where I am reminded of family and friends.

I have never experienced a time without a home. Even when moving to Toronto during the 2000 housing crisis, I knew I had a roof over my head, thanks to a generous brother. Many in our world do experience times without a home. This month, we will hear their stories—stories of migrant, refugees, and Canada's homeless.

Take a few minutes to consider what it might feel like to have no home. All your belongings would travel with you. You would be transient with no fixed address. People couldn't reach you in an emergency. Everything you take for granted would be gone. Many live like this—sometimes through no choice of their own. Even Christ had no home.

Now consider the difference you could make in the life of someone who is homeless. What would happen if you put aside a little money everyday to assist with an organization that helps those without a home? How much power would you have in writing a letter to your elected official asking for change? What would happen if you suggested to your WMS or mission committee that you sponsor a refugee family? We can make a difference. We can work to provide shelter for those in need. I hope this month's articles will educate you, and motivate you to work for change.

Migrants (such as Teresa) and undocumented migrants share one thing in common. They are in Canada to build a better life for themselves and their families.

Everyone Knows Your Name At Home

by Stephen Allen

In October 2008, KAIROS hosted a meeting of church partners from a number of countries. They gathered to discern how the church might more effectively support and accompany migrants.

One of the participants was a Mexican woman who worked on a farm in the Niagara Region of Ontario. Teresa is a single mother with three children. Each year for the past eight years, Teresa has journeyed to Canada to work so that she could support her family. Teresa did not complain about the ardours of the work or the living conditions. What she finds most painful is saying goodbye to her children for as long as eight months, each year. Teresa is one of 115,470 temporary workers admitted annually to Canada under various programs—this number has doubled since 1998. Some 65% of temporary workers in Canada, like Teresa, provide agricultural or other

labour skills for up to eight months and then return home.

There are also undocumented migrants in Canada—that is, they are not in Canada legally. The number is unknown and may range from 20,000 to as high as 200,000. These statistics need to be treated with great caution.

Migrants (such as Teresa) and undocumented migrants share one thing in common. They are in Canada to build a better life for themselves and their families.

Migration is a global phenomenon. Over 90 million people live and work outside their home country. Highly educated and skilled migrants enjoy an ease of movement across the globe. With these skills come privileges that people like Teresa can only dream of. Teresa has few options in Mexico. If she stays in Mexico, she and her children will experience deep poverty and a life without hope.

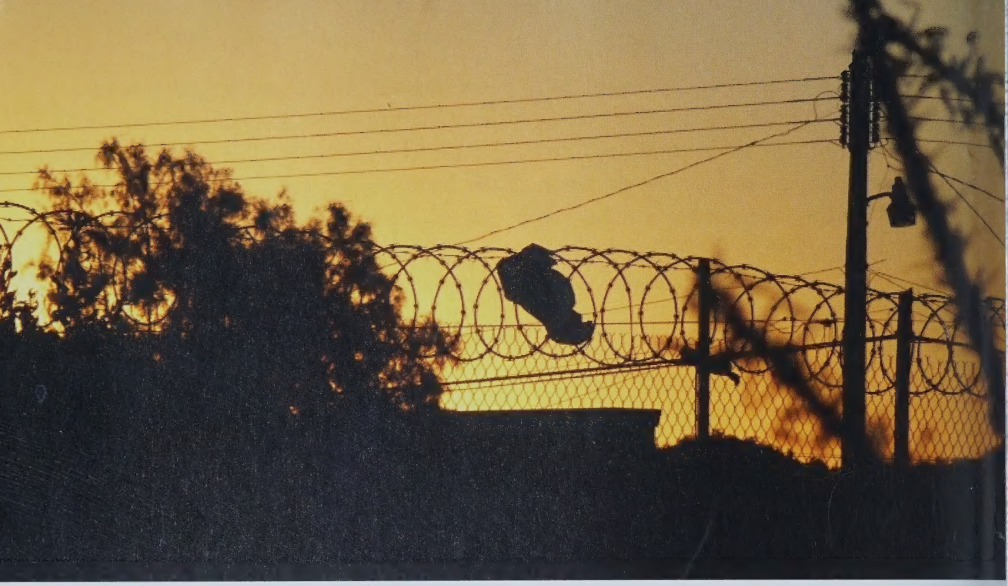
There are hundreds of thousands of undocumented migrants around the world. They take many risks in their journey to what they hope is a better life. Some 2,000 people die annually while crossing the Mediterranean Sea from Africa to Europe. They are vulnerable to exploitation, exclusion, racism, and poverty. The welcome they receive after making this perilous journey is not generally a warm one.

Closer to home, thousands of men, women, and children take extraordinary risks crossing the desert from Mexico into the United States. Most of these people are Mexican. There are an estimated 10 to 12 million undocumented migrants in the United States. They are engaged in low paying jobs and live in the shadows of American society, doing work that needs to be done. They have few basic rights and are vulnerable to exploitation.

Mexicans remit over $20 billion a year from the United States to their families in Mexico! This represents the second largest source of foreign revenue for the Mexican government, after oil and gas. There are several causes for this exodus. One reason is that the flood of highly subsidized agricultural products (such as corn) from the United States under the North American Free Trade Agreement is devastating Mexican agriculture. Hundreds of thousands of people are losing their livelihood. Another reason is that Mexico is a society where there is a large gap between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'.

Over one million people around the world are trafficked each year for the purpose of slave labour and/or sexual exploitation. Human trafficking networks gross an estimated $7 billion annually. Women and children are especially vulnerable.

Douglas Meeks is an Old Testament scholar. Meeks writes about economy, not the economy as we generally understand the word, but its ancient meaning, *oikos* and *nomos*, which means the law of management of the household. In the New Testament, we find the phrase *oikonomia tou theou* or the economy of



Over one million people around the world are trafficked each year ... trafficking networks

God. Meek suggests that economy, in its ancient sense, is about access to what is needed to live, and to live wisely using what is given to us.

A home provides for our physical needs. But a home is more than this. In a home, everyone knows your name. You can tell your story, share your hopes. You can count on being listened to, cared for, forgiven, and loved. There is a place at the table for you. What is at the table will be shared with you. If you don't have a home, there is no one to share your story with. It is like being nameless.

Meeks suggests that the foundations of a prophetic community include memory, hope, compassion, and love. He reminds us about some of the ingredients necessary to make a home. We need water for without it we cannot survive. We need bread to nurture our bodies. We need a table to break bread together, to celebrate, to share our stories, to be loved, and to be comforted. In a home, we will find a towel, the symbol of reciprocal serving and mutual life giving. A towel may be used to clean up a mess, bind a wound, or wipe away tears. Water, bread, a table, a towel—each of these objects serves a practical and symbolic purpose.

In the past year, KAIROS supported an initiative by a downtown Baptist church in Toronto. The congregation wanted to strengthen its outreach in the community and started a program called PLOT or People Lunching on Tuesdays. People in the community drop in for lunch, read a newspaper,

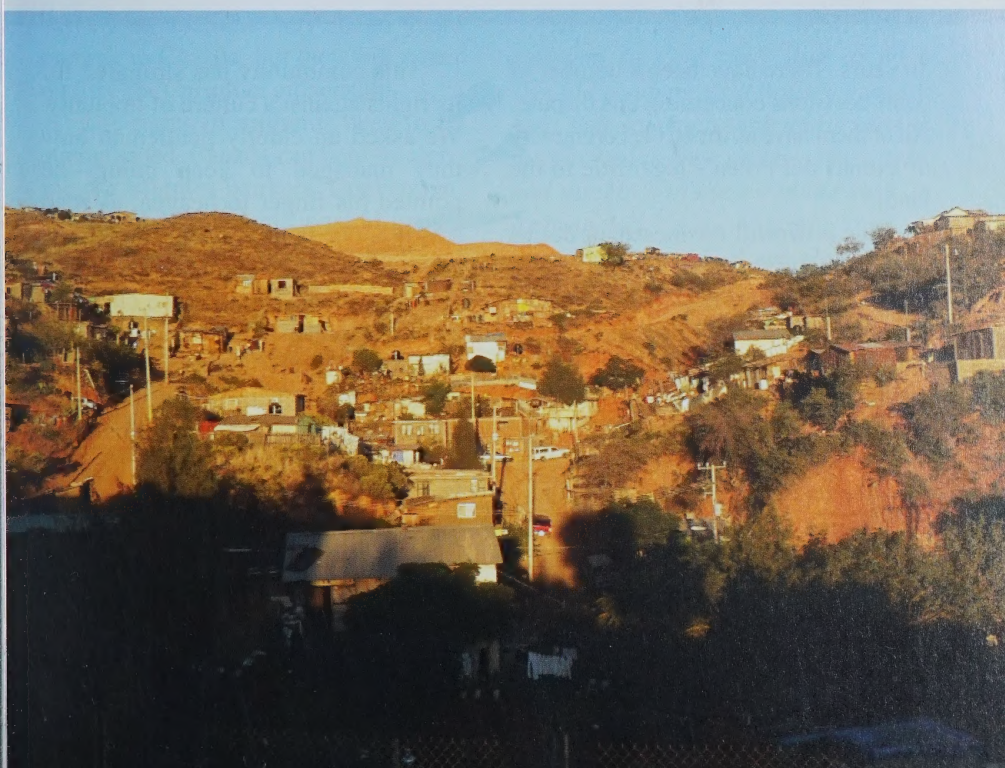
have coffee, meet people—in short to experience community. The minister at this church invited a journalist from a local newspaper to drop in and meet people. The journalist stayed for several hours and wrote about his visit in the next issue of his weekly paper. One person he wrote about is homeless.

When this homeless person read the article about himself and what had led him to being homeless, he broke down and wept. He wept not because he was angry or felt that his privacy had been violated. He agreed to be interviewed. No, he wept because perhaps for the first time in a long time, he felt validated as a human being. His story was named.

Earlier this Fall, I joined colleagues from churches and ecumenical agencies from Canada, the United States, Mexico, and El Salvador in Juarez, Mexico. Juarez is across the border from El Paso, Texas.

One morning, we met with representatives from Lomas del Poleo, a community of 150 people in Juarez. For many years, this community has been under siege by a wealthy businessman in Juarez who wants the land that this community has lived on for over

gross an estimated $7 billion annually ... Women and children are especially vulnerable.



30 years. There have been a number of court decisions concerning this dispute. All of them have affirmed the community of Lomas del Poleo's legal title to the land.

This powerful businessman defies the courts and the laws. He has built a barbed wire fence around the community. Armed men control entry at a single gate, and decide who can or cannot come and go. As the people of Lomas del Poleo were telling us their story, one of them received a phone call. Armed men had entered the community brandishing weapons. They tore down several houses. When the community members we were meeting with called the police, the police hung up.

This community has struggled for its rights against a culture of impunity. We asked an elderly gentleman how they managed to keep going—he pointed his finger to heaven, as if to say, it is our faith in God. Thankfully, the community of Lomas del Poleo receives support from some churches and local human rights organizations.

Each of these stories reminds us of the struggles so many people in Canada and around the world face in finding a secure home and community. Each of these stories also offers us opportunities to respond.

Men and women like Teresa who come to Canada as temporary workers earn wages and support their families

A home provides for our physical needs. But a home is more than this. In a home, everyone knows your name. You can tell your story, share your hopes ... If you don't have a home, there is no one to share your story with. It is like being nameless.

in ways they couldn't if they stayed at home. While most employers treat these workers with respect and dignity, some don't. Whether they work in agriculture or as family caregivers, some are exploited and abused. There are protections under Canadian law, but compliance is hard to ensure and to monitor. Fear of deportation or jeopardizing future employment discourages people from filing grievances. Under these programs, a temporary worker must have government approval to change employers. Men and women who come to Canada to work in low skilled occupations may spend years coming to Canada, but they will never qualify for Canadian citizenship.

The rights of migrants need to be strengthened. Canada can help by signing the Migrant Workers' Convention. December 18 is International Migrant's Day. On this day, pray for migrants around the world. If there are migrant-serving organizations in your community, invite a representative to speak to your congregation or Presbyterial. Justice Ministries may be able to suggest local groups in your community.

The number of homeless people in Canada is increasing. One reason is growing poverty. The good news is that several provinces are initiating policies and programs to reduce poverty. Justice Ministries can advise you if your provincial government has a poverty reduction program.

Communities like Lomas del Poleo struggle daily to survive. Our support and prayers make a difference. People from Lomas del Poleo told us that our witness is important. Knowing that fellow Mexican citizens and people from other countries care makes them feel less isolated. This gives the community of Lomas del Poleo strength and hope.

He said therefore, "What is the kingdom of God like? And to what should I compare it? It is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in the garden; it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches." (Luke 13:18–19)

As people of God, we are a people of hope. We are called to be faithful, to do what we can. We may think that what we do has no impact. But consider our action as if it is a mustard seed and know that we are not alone.

Stephen Allen is Associate Secretary, Justice Ministries for The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

* KAIROS is the Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives. The Presbyterian Church in Canada is a member of KAIROS.

Caring Alliance

by David Parker and Jean Swagerman

How long is 11 years? For some, 11 years can be a short time, but 11 years is a long time when you are working to help people who live in poverty. This is the mission of Caring Alliance which was created early in 1997. Those 11 years are made even longer when one remembers that on November 24, 1989, some 19 years ago, the House of Commons unanimously resolved to eliminate poverty among Canadian children by the year 2000. Caring Alliance advocates, on behalf of homeless families, by reminding politicians of this egregious problem—a problem that will almost certainly increase as we move into a recession. We are told that we must love not with words or tongue, but with actions and in truth.

Caring Alliance is an alliance of volunteers, from different faith communities, working in south-east Scarborough with city agencies, and the community. At our last meeting, we had representatives from 12 local churches from eight different denominations—a truly ecumenical group—as well as representatives from local agencies. Together, we support and encourage homeless and near-homeless families and attempt to influence elected representatives, business leaders, and community groups to build more affordable housing.

So who are the people that Caring Alliance loves through actions? Who are the people that we care about and care for, and through

advocacy and spreading information encourage others to care along with us? They are homeless families living, for periods up to six months and sometimes even longer, in motel rooms along Kingston Road in south-east Scarborough.

Now usually when you think of homeless people, you picture the boys and girls, men and women, often with drug, alcohol, and mental health problems, who sleep on the streets in downtown Toronto. We care about these people too, but here in south-east Scarborough our primary concern is homeless families. There are very few homeless street people in our neighbourhood as they tend to concentrate in the downtown core, but there are a large number of homeless families sleeping in emergency shelters in south-east Scarborough.

There are several reasons why families become homeless: family breakdown; spousal abuse; elder abuse; eviction; and inadequate homecare and childcare. Often a family has passed through a period of couch-surfing as they move from one friend's couch to another, until they have exhausted their circle of friends and they find themselves in a shelter or a motel room.

Motel Visit

Prayers spoken,
permission granted,
we knock at your door with a
friendly greeting,
books and cookies in hand,
easy excess from our bountiful
homes.

With caution, door slowly opening,
you welcome us into your one-room
living/sleeping/eating space,
sparse and neat,
your worldly possessions contained
by a few drawers,
high hopes drained by hard reality.

"We're from the Church"
–God–pray–alleluia–
with a word, the light of association
dawns on your face.

How giving you are,
your time,
your own coffee,
your patience,
for as we chat, you must bravely try
to master a new language.

Through a simple gesture of caring,
you appear to have been given
strength.

Our brief encounter stirs my soul.
It seems that I am the one that
has been visited.

These families are mainly single-parent—70% headed by the mother, but there is also a growing number of couples. The concentration here in Scarborough is not because of any peculiarity of Scarborough families, but because of government policy. The homeless families here are from all over the GTA, with a small number of refugee claimants. The government decided in 1991—17 years ago—as a temporary emergency measure to house the homeless families in motels along Kingston Road, centred on the Family Residence at 4222 Kingston Road. At its worst period, there were as many as 1100 individuals staying and sleeping there, which was a huge strain on the healthcare, social services, and particularly the schools in the neighbourhood. Now the number is much lower, but there are still some 415 people in the system here in Scarborough which means some 136 families every night are sleeping in emergency accommodation along Kingston Road—136 families living in fear, in loneliness, and with a sense of failure and hopelessness.

In 1997, Scarborough Public Health realized that however good the professional services were that were being provided to the homeless families, an essential factor was missing—that personal human touch, that smile of friendship, that loving

Our Church Adopted a Motel

"Hi, we're from the local church. We've brought a gift of homemade cookies and we'll stay and chat if you'd like ..." When Christian friends knock on the motel doors of homeless families housed by Toronto Community Services, they are often surprised at how the conversations unfold.

DOOR #1

A woman opens the door. She's been napping. In this one-room eating/sleeping/living space, it's difficult to get a break. The cookies will be a treat for her five kids.

DOOR #2

The room is dark, and the TV is loud. "Do I have to pay for these

concern. So they approached a number of local churches with the problem. Thus, Caring Alliance was born.

In response, Caring Alliance created a number of programs. We established the Adopt-a-Motel Program, in which a church would adopt a motel and a team from the congregation would visit and befriend the families living there. We wanted to show them God's love. We wanted to show the families that the local members of the community cared for them and loved them as individuals. The visitors would act as any friend would by visiting and offering non-judgmental, encouraging love and a listening ear, by taking small gifts of food and other items particularly for the children (and sometimes holding a baby shower), and by offering transportation to health appointments, job interviews, shopping, and apartments.

We also established a clothing and furniture bank from donations from our member congregations. We wanted to meet the needs of the children who would have no winter coats or shoes. Also, when the families were ready to settle into a residence, we realized that the basic allowance they received rarely covered their essential needs, so the furniture bank helps. We also established a back pack program, ensuring that the

cookies?" asks the sad man. Are we tricking him? Then he tells us his story. Someone to listen! These church people do care.

DOOR #3

"Oh, come in my sisters! I will make some tea." A Christian from Mexico jokes, sighs, and prays. The visitors are blessed, too!

The doors may open to many situations. We want to show that we care about them, just as Jesus has asked us to.

children did not stand out as different at school and that they would have the basic school supplies they needed.

One of our members established a Kid's Music Club, where every week children at no charge could learn the FUN-damentals—with the emphasis on FUN. They have sung and performed in local churches, bringing their parents with them.

And there were other programs all designed to show that we, the community cared, that these people often rejected by family and friends were important, were loved, and were entitled to some dignity. We also were able to raise $63,000 to sponsor a house for Habitat for Humanity, one of the organizations with whom we work closely. We publish a quarterly newsletter to inform all our member churches, local politicians, and local agencies of our activities, and to remind them that the need is still there.

With the decrease in the number of families in the motels, Caring Alliance has moved to also help poor families—the near homeless. Poor families are as diverse as non-poor families. Most poor children live in a two-parent family, led by adults in their late thirties who have graduated from high school. In general, poor families live in rental accommodation in a large community and earn most of their income from work, or a combination

Motel Drama

The scene is set.

The weary father of four young children trudges along to their temporary shelter. The two little brothers chatter and tussle, but their father's head is down, his mind a jumble of tormenting thoughts. "How could this be happening?" he says to himself. "I've tried so hard to pull my life together, and to care for my wife and family. I can't even seem to keep a roof over our heads!"

He knocks and she opens the door, their eyes not meeting. Yet another embarrassment is difficult to face. Two more frisky children frolic on the motel beds for there is little else to do. The room is bare of possessions, bare of hope. They wonder if they will ever muster what it takes to get out of this situation. If only they could have another chance!

of work and social assistance. In November 2004, we founded the Special Outreach Services (SOS). Since that time, we have helped a total of 69 families who have been referred to us through Public Health, Children's Aid, Dental Clinic, and Caring Alliance members. We have been able to provide household furniture, small appliances and other kitchen items, clothes, baby furniture, and food. These items have been donated to us by our member churches and by our partner, West Hill Community Services, to families as they move out of the shelter system of motels and Family Residence along Kingston Road.

In spite of the current economic problems, a new Environic Research Poll shows the majority of Canadians believe that Canada should try to distinguish itself in the world as a country where no one lives in poverty. As a group of Canadian economists wrote in a recent *Toronto Star* editorial, "The best and cheapest poverty reduction strategy is to move swiftly with investments on affordable housing, education and training, early learning and child care, public transit, income supports, and jobs that pay living wages."

There are many heart-breaking, but inspiring stories of the incredible spirit of these families, of their determination to advance and to provide a

Enter the visitors from the Church.

We walk with determined steps, hugely aware of the communication challenge we face at each door. We feel empowered for we know that, of all people, we can relate. For we, the people of God, have been there, too. Though our circumstances may be different, our situations are similar. We've blown it, too. We've tried to do the right thing with all good intentions of love and justice, but it hasn't always worked out in the end. Yet we carry on, comforted by His encouraging presence among us in the midst of our struggles. For our God is the God of second, third, fourth, and endless chances. Our God is fullness in the barrenness of a desert experience, of hope from a bottomless pit.

All glory to you, Father God, Redeemer, Saviour. We are daily strengthened by your love, your grace, your mercy. Please help us to be fitting extensions of this, your caring, strong arm, to our motel friends.

loving home for their children that they hope will have a better life than they did. It is a particular thrill when we learn of a family who has achieved this. Caring Alliance does what it can to help them in their struggle and to remind them of God's love. Our immediate reward is to watch a family return to a more normal life—a life not without problems, but a life with hope and love.

What is poverty like for a child?
These are the words of Grades 4 and 5 children.

Poverty is ...

Wishing you could go to McDonald's
Getting a basket from the Santa Fund
Feeling ashamed when my Dad can't get a job
Not getting to go to birthday parties
Not buying books at the book fair
Hearing my Dad and my Mom fight over money
Not ever getting a pet because it costs too much
Wishing you had a nice house
Not being able to go camping
Not going to Canada's Wonderland
Not being able to have your friends sleep over
Pretending that you forgot your lunch
Being afraid to tell your Mom that you need gym shoes
Not having any breakfast sometimes
Not being able to play hockey
Sometimes really hard because my Mom gets scared and she cries
Hiding your feet so your teacher won't get mad when you don't have boots
Not being able to go to cubs or play soccer
Not being able to take swimming lessons
Not being able to take an elective (down-hill skiing)
Not being able to afford a holiday
Not having pretty barrettes in your hair
Not having your own backyard
Being teased for the way you are dressed
Not getting to go on school trips

Christ's Living Journey

by Elaine Forgo

The May/June 2008 edition of *Glad Tidings,* with its emphasis on art in its varied and numerous forms, and how it expresses our feelings and connects us to God, gave our Knox Burlington WMS group a theme for our Spring pot-luck dinner meeting.

Our congregation is fortunate to have Patty Kirby, our very own gifted artist. She spoke to our group about the ability that art, in its many forms, provides for the release of one's own deep inner feelings and the resulting accomplishment and empowerment it has in one's life. Patty's triptych entitled *Christ's Living Journey* is a labour of love gifted to our church during its 150th anniversary.

She states, "My way of being of service seems to be the ability to visually illustrate. There was a story to tell. The painting includes many stories that were handed to us by way of the New Testament readings." The work illustrates, "... the never-ending journey Christ took while here on earth. There is a beginning, a time of teaching, and the death—and the resurrection of the body and spirit is never ending."

Patty felt spiritually moved which led her to paint this beautiful piece of art. It took her one year to plan for it and two years to complete the three, 8 x 4 feet panels. There are 75–80 different stories/symbols one can take note of when viewing this large, colourful, creative expression of love. Patty says, "I would be happy to orate a description of the triptych for any group wishing to view it." Some images and initials of those whose inspiration helped Patty over the years have been subtly included in the rendering.

It was an evening of fellowship, learning, and encouragement to reach out to others by being creative.

Helping Those in Need

by Jean Bradley

If you are sitting in a warm home today, with reasonable health, you should thank God for what you have. Many in my area, the Niagara Region, and many more across Canada, are living in poverty or on the verge of it. In my area, many manufacturing jobs at General Motors (this used to be known as a GM town), the paper mills, Dana, John Deere, and other companies have disappeared. Layoffs have occurred in tourism, retail, finance, and even the casinos. The Niagara Region, as reported in November by Statistics Canada, has suffered the second highest job loss in all of Canada. Niagara Community Services Commissioner, Brian Hutchings, released a report indicating the median income in this area is one of the lowest in Ontario. The unemployment rate of 8.2% in November resulted in a higher demand for help from food banks, with an increase of 23.9% between September 2007 and September 2008.

Many of the jobs that are available are in the service sector, part-time and seasonal work at minimum wage or close to it (about $15,200 yearly with no health benefits, pension, or job security). The welfare income of a single person in Ontario was $7,204 last year. A single mother with one child lived on $16,439, about 25% below the poverty level. Then, there are those who cannot hold a job due to mental, drug, alcohol, and gambling addiction problems. A report issued in early December by Auditor General, Jim McCarter, indicated that even though the Ontario government is spending $130 million to fight alcohol, drug, and gambling addiction, it helps about only 10% of those in need. It also stated that many people with serious mental problems are not receiving an appropriate level of care.

It is these people who make use of the Out of the Cold program on Friday nights at Knox Presbyterian Church in St. Catharines, Ontario. This program, now in its 12th year, is available each night of the week at different churches from the first of November until the end of March. Each church must raise its own funds. The city, regional, and provincial governments do not provide any funding. Run by volunteers, each church provides supper, overnight accommodation, and breakfast. At these churches for the 21 weeks from November 2007 to the end of March 2008, 17,502 meals were served and sleeping accommodation was provided for 3,322.

In addition, Knox also runs bi-weekly barbecues from the first of June until the end of October that feed an average of 84 people each time. During the winter program warm clothing, boots, shoes, underwear, socks, hats, mitts, coats, vests, and toiletries are available. These programs at Knox cost approximately $17,000. We are fortunate that the congregation, community, and local businesses support this program.

Other programs are sparse. There are ten shelters in the St. Catharines, Niagara Falls, and Welland areas, but none of them will take someone on drugs or alcohol, leaving only two detox centres that will. The Out of the Cold program provides for the hardest to serve. Seldom does an outreach worker from the Mental Health and Housing Help Centre come to Knox. The people needing help must go to their office with identification and be receiving Ontario Works Benefits (welfare) in order to perhaps obtain a decent place to rent—however, no one wants to rent to this type of person.

Knox, at this writing in early December, is serving an average of 130 meals and providing a mattress, blanket, and pillow for 29 people each week, mainly men of varying ages. The number using this program indicates that the federal, provincial, and local governments are doing little to help these people. Is it too easy to put the responsibility for the homeless, the working poor, and those with disabilities on the volunteers who run the Out of the Cold program? Without this program what would these people do? Would crime increase? Would abuse rise? Would more lose their place to live? Where would they find a warm place to sleep, find food, showers, clothing or someone to talk with? What future would their children have growing up poor? The list is endless.

The Out of the Cold program helps, but much more is needed. It hurts to put these people out of the church at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday morning with no where to go, but to begin the day wandering from place to place. The Government of Ontario is to release Ontario's Poverty Reduction Plan by the end of December 2008 and hopefully it will provide ways to break the cycle of poverty and will outline ways to improve the quality of life for the approximately 905,000 poorest households in Ontario (*Toronto Star*, November 20, 2008).

Economist, Robin Eaglesham, of the Meridian Credit Union states, "All indications are that the worst is still ahead of us and 2009 will be a very challenging year for all of us in Niagara." (St. Catharines, *Standard*). Hopefully, the Out of the Cold program will continue to find sufficient volunteers and funds to be able to continue helping the needy in our community.

As a volunteer of this program for the past 12 years, there have been happy and sad times. Happy memories when guests leave with a smile saying thank you or when a guest returns as a volunteer having changed his/her way of living. Unfortunately, sad times too, when you learn about losing another street person who was unable to change his/her lifestyle.

... for I was hungry and you gave me food,
I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink,
I was a stranger and you welcomed me.

Matthew 25:35

People Without a Home

Refugees

Refugees in Thailand, credit: UNHCR

by Glynis Williams

It is perhaps not surprising that many Christians describe their congregation and its members as their church home. Rarely does this refer to the actual church building. Usually it speaks of the sense of belonging to a community of people who are concerned for your well-being; people you might count as friends. The concept of home is a powerful one for it carries with it the notion of inclusion within a group, a place where you can belong, feel valued, and be safe.

Belonging, being safe, and feeling valued, are precisely what refugees do not have. They are without a home.

Refugees are people—people who have been uprooted from their homes, having fled for a variety of reasons. Violence, war, poverty, human rights violations, and environmental factors are all reasons for flight. Their persecution may be because they are from a minority racial or religious group. Political opinions that threaten the ruling government may also force someone to flee in order to avoid persecution.

There are an estimated 100 million people on our planet who are displaced from their homes. Some will have chosen to leave in search of work or a better life. But of this number, approximately 11 million are considered refugees: victims of persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, membership in a social group, or political persecution. Their decision to leave is not a voluntary one.

Women and children account for 75% of the world's refugees. The tragedy of the situations that create refugees is that it is the innocent victims who often bear the resultant suffering.

Dr. James Milner, a Canadian Presbyterian, writes that "more than two-thirds of refugees in the world today are trapped in so-called 'protracted refugee situations'. Such situations—often characterized by long periods of exile, stretching to decades for some groups—are concentrated in some of the world's poorest and most unstable regions, and now account for the vast majority of the world's refugees. Perhaps more troubling is the fact that refugee situations are lasting longer and proving more difficult to resolve. UNHCR estimates that the average of major refugee situations has increased from nine years in 1993 to 17 years at the end of 2003."

Milner continues, "Most refugees trapped in protracted refugee situations are forced to live in isolated and insecure refugee camps, generally in remote border areas, and consequently face a number of protection and human rights challenges. Levels of sexual and physical violence in refugee camps are typically very high, and refugee women and children are at a particular high risk. The prolonged encampment of refugee populations has also led to the violation of a number of refugee rights, including freedom of movement and the right to work. Faced with these restrictions, refugees become dependent on subsistence-level assistance, or less, and lead lives of poverty, frustration, and unrealized potential." (*Women's Perspectives*, December 2008)

The lives of refugees are characterized by insecurity and uncertainty. They are dependent on the international community for a solution to their problem. With so many crises internationally, it is not surprising that some refugee communities receive less attention than they deserve, especially if the crisis is taking place far from the mainstream media.

It is said that there are three durable solutions for refugees: temporary asylum in a neighbouring country while they

wait for the situation to change in their country; voluntary return home when conditions permit; and thirdly, resettlement in a third country. However, as noted by Dr. Milner above, refugees are living extended periods of time in limbo. In some circles, the term for this is called 'warehousing of refugees', a term usually reserved for cargo rather than human beings.

There is hope for some. In recent years, Canada has welcomed refugees from Myanmar (formerly Burma), ending years of confinement in refugee camps in Thailand. It is almost inconceivable to imagine that children grow to adulthood in refugee camps and their children face a similar fate, but this is what has been happening.

Knox Presbyterian Church in Woodstock sponsored one family, yet much of this family was left behind. When resettled families must leave behind family members in the camp, they can feel paralyzed knowing that they have little or no means to help those left behind. For those who have been sponsored, it can delay their sense of belonging in their new home. Feelings of guilt can slow down the process of integration, the process of establishing oneself in the new country, and forming attachments. Recognizing the pain of separation from other children who were left behind, Knox Church agreed to sponsor the remaining family members who are refugees in Thailand. At the time of writing, they are awaiting an interview by the Canadian Embassy officials. We hope they will be accepted for resettlement in Canada and that the family can be re-united in the near future. Only

then will this refugee family have found a true home, where they can live in peace and security.

Working with refugees is a ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Canada and it is one way in which we express our faith and offer a home—a place for all of God's children. This ministry requires that we respond with compassion and sometimes confrontation—denouncing the forces and policies that create refugees in the first place. This can be difficult, but the blessings of Christ attend to those who respond to the call to welcome the stranger among us.

We remember that home carries with it inclusion, belonging, value, and safety. Let's help all in this world to find a place to call home.

Glynis Williams is the director of Refugee Action Montreal, a ministry supported by Canada Ministries of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Sacrifice

by Carolyn Wilker

My borrowed beast
climbs the rocky path
treading cautiously over robes
that carpet dusty earth

shaded
by a canopy of palms
his body trembles amid shouts of

Hosanna

such a young colt
he does not hurry –
as if he knows what is to come

outside the city gates
the crowd thins and hosannas fade
inside
a poor man empties his pocket
to buy a dove

my beast of burden can rest now
my time is coming

Easter Worship Service

by Beth McCutcheon

Greeting and Call to Worship:

Leader: Christ is risen.
People: Christ is risen indeed!
Leader: Peace be with you.
People: And also with you.
Leader: In joy and thanksgiving, wonder and awe, let us worship God.

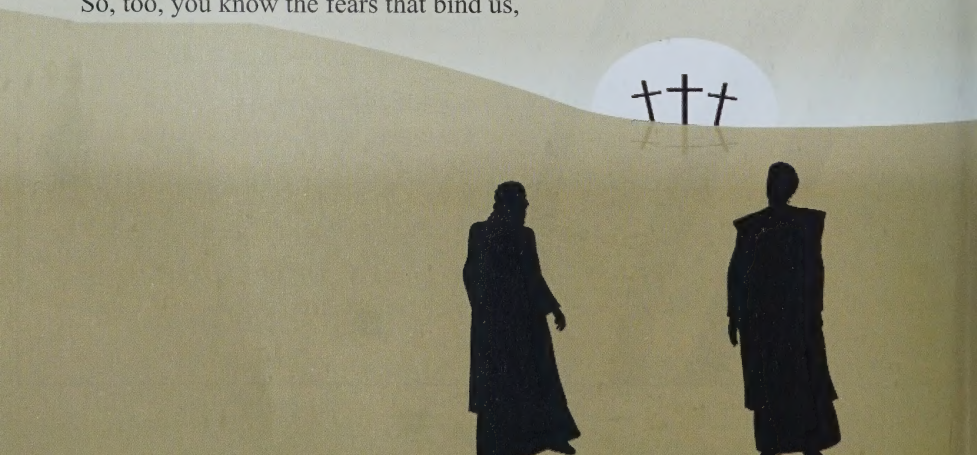
Hymn: #255 Now let the vault of heaven resound

Prayer of Adoration:

God of all glory,
on the first day of the week
you began creation,
bringing light out of darkness.
On the first day of the week,
you began your new creation,
raising Jesus Christ from the darkness of death.
Rejoicing in Christ's resurrection, joined with your Church throughout the world
and your people in heaven and on earth,
We sing hallelujah, praising you through Jesus Christ,
in union with the Holy Spirit.

Prayer of Confession: (unison)

Loving God, You know us so well.
Even before a word is on our lips, you know it completely.
So, too, you know the fears that bind us,



The terror that grips us,
The anxiety that paralyzes us,
The self-consciousness that holds us back,
The vulnerability we try to hide,

We cling to grief,
Hold tight to old wounds and past disappointments,
Relive failure in our minds,
Keep to ourselves so we don't get hurt.

Silence

Hymn: #110 Come thou long expected Jesus, verse 1

Assurance of Pardon:

In Jesus Christ we have been reconciled to God who knows us and loves us. Know that you are forgiven and be at peace.

Scripture: John 20: 19–29

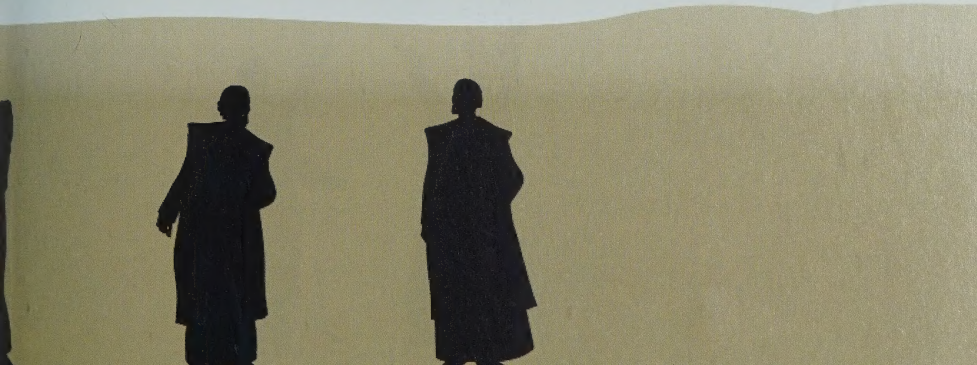
Leader: The word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

Hymn: #452 Jesus, stand among us

Meditation:

'Quarantined by fear' is the phrase heard at various times on the news. In 2009, to describe residents of Gaza; in 2001, to describe those frightened by the threat of Anthrax. It could also have been used in the Easter account for the self-enforced isolation of Jesus' disciples after the crucifixion. It is a good description, 'quarantined by fear'.

Grief and fear, not joy and excitement, is the place where the Easter story begins in John's gospel. At the crack of dawn on the first Easter day, Mary Magdalene stands weeping outside the tomb. At the end of the day, out of fear, the frightened disciples barricade themselves behind locked doors.



'Quarantined by fear' describes not only the first disciples—it describes us. To retreat when things don't make sense, to hide from things or people that threaten us, to withdraw to a place of security so we don't have to deal with the world, that's what *we* do. We know about living behind closed doors.

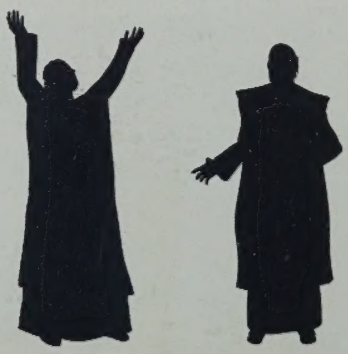
Sometimes, safe behind closed doors, where everything and everyone is familiar, is where we prefer to stay. It is less than life it its fullness; it is less than what we had hoped for. And we know that, but there is a measure of safety there which we cling to. Behind closed doors, walled off from what exists beyond our circle of friends and what lies beyond our insecurities and fears, that's where we sometimes find ourselves. More often than not, that's where Jesus finds us.

There is the turning point in the gospel story and in our lives. The Risen Jesus loves us and comes to us even, and maybe especially, through doors we have shut out of fear. Jesus doesn't wait for an invitation. Jesus doesn't wait for those whom he loves to pull themselves together, to get over their grief, and to regain their energy. Jesus doesn't wait for us to do anything. Because Jesus loves us he takes the initiative. He meets us where we are, greets us as we are, offering the gift of his presence, and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Did you notice that the circumstances which caused the disciples to withdraw from the world didn't change, but the disciples did? So it is for us. When the risen Christ comes to us, our problems, fears, and insecurities don't necessarily disappear. More often than not, they remain. What changes is us.

How does the risen Christ meet us? How do we recognize Jesus' presence? Here are some of the ways: in the eyes of a friend, in the reading of scripture, in the loving touch of someone who cares about us, and in the silent moments when we think we are alone. Each one of us could probably name other ways we recognize the risen Christ.

Comforted, empowered, commissioned, Jesus sends the first disciples and us out into the world. Jesus says, "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." The risen Christ gives us mission; he calls us to service in and for the world.



What the first disciples and we discover is that when we try to live out Christ's mission and ministry, we realize the abilities and strengths Jesus has given us. When, following Christ's command, we step out from behind closed doors, we discover that the power Jesus has breathed on us is a Holy Spirit of power. We are freed from fear, freed to live fully, and freed to do the work God has called us to do.

Prayer:

Ever-faithful God whose love never fails, we thank you for your work in Jesus Christ. Through Christ you call women and men, young and old, to step beyond concern for their own lives and to embrace a calling that involves caring for the world in your name. We thank you for the first disciples who risked persecution when they stepped out from behind locked doors to speak about you and your work in Jesus Christ; for Canadian missionaries who, responding to your call, left the familiarity of home to share the gospel in lands far away; for those who today courageously and prophetically advocate for, and labour for dignity and justice for all people; and for those who risk their lives delivering food and medical aid in war zones.

(Here prayers may be said for particular missionaries, for people in local congregations who serve God in a variety of ways in their local community or internationally, and for those who offer leadership on cutting-edge issues. People could also be invited to share where God might be calling them to move beyond their comfort zone to share in the ministry of Christ.)

Your presence is peace, your Spirit gives life. In moving beyond ourselves to engage in the ministry to which you have called us, we discover the strength we have in you.

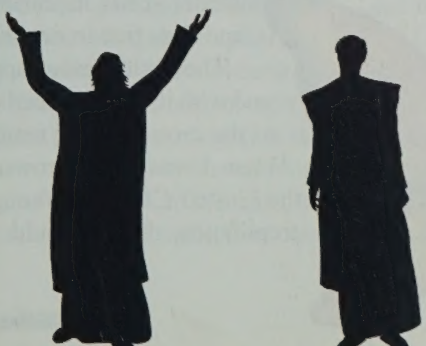
Thanks be to you, O God!

One voice: We are a people loved by Jesus.
Two voices: We are a people loved and given power by the risen Christ.
All: We are a people loved, and given power, and sent into the world.

Hymn: #396 As comes the breath of spring

Leader: The Easter story continues and we are part of it.

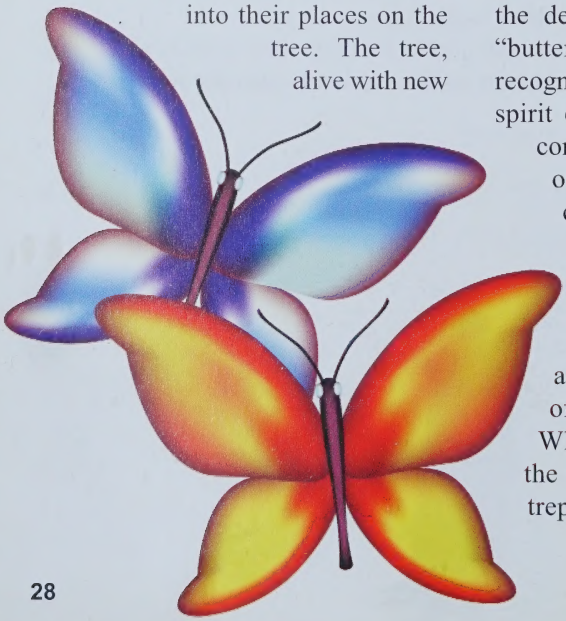
Hymn: #490 God of grace and God of glory, verse 1



The Cross and the Butterfly

by L. June Stevenson

I sat with a friend in a lovely garden outside a hospital in Whitby, Ontario, one September evening. The trees were already shedding their glorious Autumn colours. A monarch butterfly fluttered by and landed on a branch of a nearby tree. Within moments, another butterfly passed by, landing on another branch. Suddenly the sky was filled with black and gold wings all settling into their places on the tree. The tree, alive with new life, was a miracle, like Moses must have experienced with the bush that burst into flame. For me and my friend, Margaret, a victim of locked-in syndrome following a stroke in 1979 and unable to move anything but her eyelids, it was a wondrous sight.



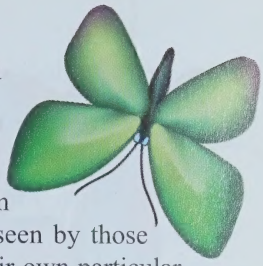
I thought of that phrase coined by Elizabeth Kubler-Ross who saw children's paintings of butterflies on the walls of the death camps in Nazi Germany, "butterflies are free." Kubler-Ross recognized the butterfly as an emerging spirit contained in the bodies of the condemned. She used the life cycle of the butterfly to explain death to children in a way they could comprehend. The loved one, at death, sheds its earthly body, and flies free in new life.

The Easter season approaches and with it, the perennial dilemma of the cross and the resurrection. When I was little, growing up in the United Church, I thought with trepidation that I would need to

"take up my cross" at some future day, presumably when I was an adult. I pictured myself like some of the older people I knew with a constant furrow in my brow and my body bent under the weight of an unseen burden. Taking up the cross was intimidating and unsettling, even frightening.

In my mid-twenties, after enduring two serious illnesses, I perceived that one's cross could be just that, illness. I knew then that none of us is impervious to sickness, whether it is the common cold or something more life threatening. As I lay in a hospital bed at 18 years of age, undergoing tests, a teenage friend lay across the room from me. Susie would later die from tuberculosis. I was more fortunate. Later in life, experiencing the discomfort and frustration of chronic illnesses like arthritis and obstructive sleep apnea seemed to validate my understanding of "the cross I must bear."

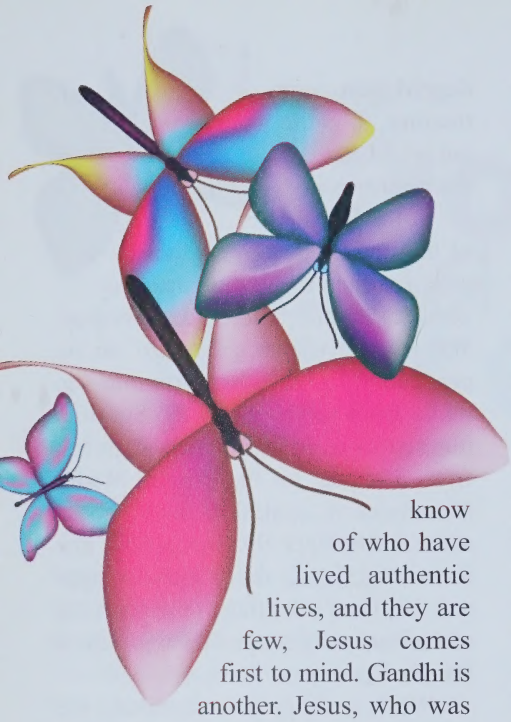
Older and wiser now, and certainly full of life experience, I have seen my share of the dark side of life—the hungry and dying in Ethiopia; prisoners in both minimum and maximum security prisons in Canada. I have worked with and written of victims of abuse, addiction and marginalization. Their struggles inform me that there is no way to cope and survive their particular challenges except with the oft-quoted aphorism, "One day at a time." More accurately for a lot of persons, it is one thought at a time. There is no other way. It is the way of the cross: to move forward into the darkness and to bear the pain; to take up the cross of affliction and degradation, and trusting, to come out on the side of the resurrection.



In the freedom of the butterfly, seen by those imprisoned in their own particular versions of hell, choice is perceived. The butterfly chooses to go on its predestined journey each Autumn—to move from the North to the South, a journey of over four thousand miles, from Canada to the Sierra Madre Mountains in central Mexico. These same butterflies fly northwards the following Spring; the females lay eggs and die. Their offspring or the offspring of the returning butterflies will repeat the journey at next Summer's end.

While perhaps it is stretching the truth to say that the butterflies actually *make* a choice, the action they take in a genetically preordained dance, is symbolic of our human journey. We too, perhaps genetically programmed to seek the kingdom of God throughout our journey through this life, are called to move from darkness into light, from weakness into strength, from death into resurrection, and from defeat into victory. In our dying it is not the death that is significant—it is the quality of our living.

Life is a process of becoming. The search for meaning is universal. To live an "authentic life" is to choose to follow a road that ultimately leads to self knowledge. It is to move forward with single-minded purpose towards truth and freedom. When I think of those I



know of who have lived authentic lives, and they are few, Jesus comes first to mind. Gandhi is another. Jesus, who was focused on what he believed his purpose to be, was true to the end. Scripture tells us he overcame his personal Gethsemane and walked to the resurrection through a cross. There was no back door to the resurrection for him.

Jesus carried his own cross to Calvary and there he suffered great agony. If you would believe Mel Gibson's brutal account in the film, "The Passion of the Christ," the weight of the cross Jesus carried was 150–200 kilograms. One of reasons the Easter story has continued to move so effectively along the corridors of history is the example Jesus set. He chose to confront the cross, and to endure it. In overcoming self, he overcame death in an esoteric sense.

The dilemma of the cross is still how *we* are to take up our crosses. Is it that we bear with fortitude the trials that come our way in life and live as best as we can? Perhaps. Yet, after telling his disciples that whoever will follow him needs to take up their cross, Jesus goes on in Matthew 16 to say that to *truly* follow him, one must lose one's life. Does that mean we should be prepared to lay our lives on the line for our faith, in fact to die?

While the apostles interpreted that literally, and all but two, including Judas, followed Jesus into martyrdom, we recognize that Jesus also meant we need to die to self. "Dying to self" means putting our faith first. Secondly, we need to die to all that keeps us from living godly lives, just as Jesus did. We are then to love others and care for them as we care for ourselves as written in Matthew 22, verse 39.

Simone Weil, French philosopher, mystic and activist, was Jewish, but her mystical experiences brought her to the threshold of Christianity. Weil saw the cross as a place of extreme affliction, a physical and mental anguish well beyond the norm, akin to the horrors people suffered during the Holocaust. It is a place where we kneel in our most extreme moments of abject degradation and failure.[1]

The empty tomb and the victory of the resurrection stand in the shadow of the cross and neither can be dealt with in isolation. Episcopalian Bishop John Shelby Spong said, "The reality being proclaimed was that the being of God had dawned in Jesus could not be terminated and that Jesus, in some way,

brought this God to us;" and "life that transcends every human limit is a powerful portrait. Death, which opens all things to new possibilities; love, which triumphs over hatred; being, which overcomes nonbeing—those are the truths to which Easter points..."[2] I believe along with James B. Nelson who said the early accounts of Easter were "powerful testimonies in first-century language about a person who was so utterly filled with God that death could not define him, contain him, or conquer him."[3] These are central to my faith in God. Jesus overcame death in a way that emphasizes the importance of how we live out our lives.

It says to me that I find within myself the kingdom of God, that divine spark in the very centre of what is essentially me. Each time I am tempted to take the easy way through a problem, to take the road commonly travelled. I can choose to stop and say, "No." I can enter into the "pain" of what is torture for me. I can feel the pain of being alone with my suffering and welcome its presence. Pain is not in carrying the cross; it is in *enduring* it. It is saying *yes* to life, not death. It is being able to suffer on the cross, until the suffering is over and done. The cross is being able to die to self, to die to all the negative habits and sins that keep us from being free in Christ.

It seems to me that Christ came to teach us about finding the true self within each of us. When Jesus said, "the kingdom of heaven is within" he was directing us to the divine within each of us, that holy place where we meet and know God. Krishna declared: "I am the Self, seated in the hearts of all creatures. I am the beginning, the middle, and the end of all beings."[4]

For each of us, whatever our "cross," whatever the sin we keep secret, whatever keeps us from freedom in life, God knows, and God stands ready to forgive and accept us as we are, warts and all.

We can no longer stand beneath the old rugged cross and gaze upwards into the face of our dying Lord: we must take our place on the cross beside him in order to understand the kind of God that we follow, a God who hangs on the cross with us, and triumphs over death. With him, we too will become fully God, fully human.

---

[1] Simone Weil. *Writings Selected* with an introduction by Eric O. Springsted. Modern Spiritual Masters Series. Orbis Books. Maryknoll, NY. 1998

[2] John Shelby Spong. *Why Christianity Must Change or Die: A Bishop Speaks to Believers in Exile*. Harpur,San Francisco. 1998

[3] James Nelson. *Thirst: God and the Alcoholic Experience*. Westminster John Knox. Louisville. London. 2004

[4] Bagvaad Gita 10:20

Former editor of Glad Tidings, *L. June Stevenson with two new granddaughters:*

Chloe Isabel Lepp (left), three weeks old, and Ella June Stevenson (right) five weeks old.

I'm Home

by Audrey Cameron

I knew who it was as soon as I heard the voice. Though my back was to him, my arms loaded with Christmas groceries and my mind on the 50 things left to do before I headed home, I heard him clearly, "Dorothy, it's me, I am home."

There is only one person in the world who calls me Dorothy. It has never been my name, except in Sam's world. I have corrected him many times till I finally understood; to him I would always be Dorothy. He came running to me, across the parking lot, "I am home. I wanted you to know I am home."

I could not admit to him that I did not know he was away. I could not admit to him that I did not notice he was not playing his guitar by the town hall, case open, hoping for a loonie or two. I dared not tell him that I did not notice his absence from the entrance to my favourite coffee shop where he always found someone to talk over the joys of that day. I felt shame as I realized that I only think of him when I am in his presence. I was humbled that it mattered to him that I knew he was home.

I met Sam many years before when he came to work on our farm, raking blueberries. Work may not be the right word. He came and socialized. He would earn enough to support his nicotine addiction and feel joy in getting a cheque. It seemed to be enough for him. From that moment on, Sam and I were friends, if that is the right word. He would sing to me on the street, call to me if I drove by, and always seek me out if he saw me. I would hear about his latest love interest or how he had to move again. I would hear about any kindness offered to him. I would hear about the latest … in his life. And then he would always ask about the blueberry harvest and I would smile at his interest and imagine his relief that he had nothing to do with it anymore! As far as I knew, Sam never had a job, a family, or a permanent place to live, until that day in the parking lot.

"Dorothy, I was living with my son. I wanted to give him a kick. He needed to get to work and get off the drugs. He's good now, so I could come home." Everything he said startled me. He had a son? He cared about work? He wanted him clean? We had a great

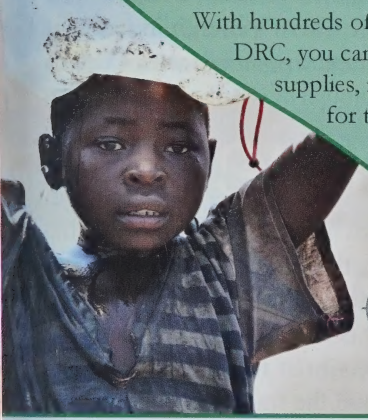
In the Grip of War Hope Prevails

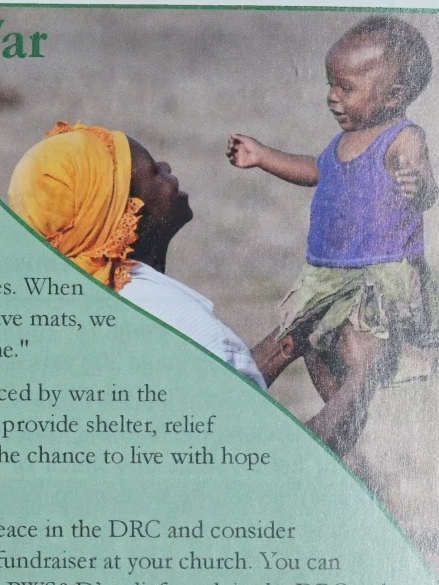
wagira, a 23-year-old mother of four, fled from
er home with her family to escape violence in
eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Now living in a construction site, she shares the challenges of life in limbo, "There are no latrines. When it rains the water comes inside. We do not have mats, we sleep on rocks... We just want to go home."

With hundreds of thousands displaced by war in the DRC, you can help PWS&D to provide shelter, relief supplies, medical care and the chance to live with hope for the future.

Please pray for peace in the DRC and consider organizing a fundraiser at your church. You can donate to PWS&D's relief work in the DRC today.





Presbyterian World Service & Development

50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, Ont. M3C 1J7 • 1-800-619-7301
www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd

conversation as I listened to his tale of adventure and how glad he was to be home.

As I drove home that day, I wondered about Sam. Where was he living? Is he OK? What was it that made him so glad to be back to our little town? A year ago, Sam became a local hero. He was in the wrong place at the right time, playing his guitar. He saw a runaway truck heading toward our busiest downtown street and quickly stopped traffic and averted a tragedy. Media affirmed him, locals congratulated him, and a local business man bought him a used car and a new guitar. He was a happy man. It hit me. Home, for Sam is not about career and accommodation, but about relationship. Home, for Sam is where people know his name. Home, for Sam, is about affirmation of who he is.

I have not stopped thinking about Sam. I haven't seen him since, but this time I am noticing his absence. Next time I see him, I hope it's me that gets to yell first, "Sam, it's Dorothy, you are home!" And in hearing, I can only hope that I will offer to him, what that day in the parking lot, he offered to me, an encounter with the One who eternally says, " ... I have called you by name, you are mine." (Isaiah 43:1)

Welcome Home, Sam.

Mission in Action

David Webber
Cariboo Presbyterian Church

Dear Partners in Mission,

Well, we are almost 20 years old—2009 marks the 20th year since this mission began. It's hard for Linda and me to believe that this much of our lives has been invested in mission work in this one area of Christ's vineyard, but it has. The funny thing about time is it just marches along as you live your life doing the next thing. After all is said and done though, we have had a strong sense of God's call and God's sending out as we have served Him day by day in mission in the Cariboo Chilcotin. And it is to this "sending out" that this small letter is dedicated. That means it is dedicated to you.

The very word 'missionary' comes from a Greek word via the Latin that means, "sent one." The word in Greek is the word we are all so familiar with in the Bible, the word 'apostle'. Apostles were sent ones. Missionaries are sent ones. The sending out happens in at least two ways: Christ touches one's heart and calls one out and Christ's people touch one's ear and sends one out with much prayer and physical support. For 20 years, you, and others like you, have been prayerfully and financially sending us out to do mission work for Christ among the rural people of Cariboo Chilcotin. Without this process, it would have never happened, and neither could it continue.

The Cariboo Presbyterian Church is truly a regional mission. Many of you experience Christ's church in terms of one geographic point of focus. Christ's mission through the Cariboo Presbyterian Church covers a huge region with a large rural population scattered across an area that accounts for about one-fifth of the province of BC. In most of the locations that we work, there is no other ordered Christian witness. We believe this is true mission—taking the church of Christ to rural people who live beyond the traditional church. No one else is doing what we do. We believe that because of this, what we do is crucial mission work.

The Cariboo Presbyterian Church is a dependent mission—dependent on Christ and on you! Please continue to remember us in your prayers and offerings.

Clara Henderson
On Study Leave

I have been on study leave since 2000 while I work on my Ph.D. in Ethnomusicology at Indiana University, Bloomington. I just submitted a draft of my dissertation to my committee and

will have my defense on December 1. There will be a number of tasks I need to complete after my defense, but I plan to submit the completed dissertation to the graduate school in January or February 2009. Once the university processes my dissertation submission, they will send me my Ph.D. degree. So, I am close to finishing my studies.

My dissertation is titled, "Dance Discourse in the Music and Lives of Presbyterian Mvano Women in Southern Malawi." Below is an abstract of the dissertation:

This study investigates attitudes towards women's spiritual leadership in the Presbyterian church in southern Malawi, and explores the diverse opinions of dance held by Malawian Presbyterians, early Scottish missionaries, and contemporary members of Presbyterian women's guilds, or Mvano.

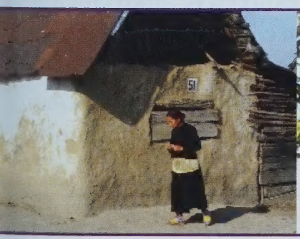
Mission Awareness

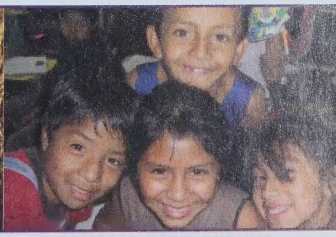
Sunday, April 26, 2009

Join church across Canada in
celebration of mission work
and mission possibilities.

Theme: "Things we saw ... Gifts Received"

This year's resources have been written by
the Reverends Don and Marion MacKay.





Resources are available online at:
www.wmspcc.ca under Mission Awareness Sunday

Sunday

Overseas Staff Birthdays

June

1 - Louise Gamble, Taiwan
22 - Rebecca Leona Onuoha, Nigeria
23 - Nathanael Taylor Allison, Cameroon

July

5 - Murray Garvin, Taiwan

Concluding that expressive movement is an essential component of the Mvano's communicative vocabulary, this study demonstrates that Mvano women dance in greeting and in sorrow or joy. Affirming women's spiritual authority, this study also illustrates how Mvanos dance as a means of theological commentary, individual and collective prayer, and phenomenological social exchange at their weekly meetings, large church events, and when engaged in community service and evangelism.

Based on experiential ethnography, formal and informal interviews, video and audio fieldwork recordings, archival research, published materials, and a 25-year association with the Mvano by the author, this is an ethnomusicological study of how Mvano use dance discourse to create spaces of spiritual communion, social interaction, and self-expression in their music and everyday lives.

When Scottish Presbyterians established their missions in southern Malawi in 1876, one of their first evangelism strategies was to teach Christian converts European hymns translated into local languages. Over time, groups like the Mvano developed a tradition of re-shaping these hymns to more accurately express Malawian musical preferences and spiritual perspectives by altering them musically and rhythmically, augmenting translated English text with Mvano-composed text, and dancing to them while moving counter clockwise in a circle. The Mvano's vast musical repertoire, which includes their own compositions as well as these reinterpreted hymns, is unique for its performance style, which utilizes drama, mime, and synchronized dance steps. That dance is fundamental to Mvano music and is significant given the history of controversy among Malawian and Scottish Presbyterians regarding the propriety of certain dances and expressive movements within Christian context, particularly in relation to women's bodies.

I am prayerfully considering what to do next and have not yet made my final decision.

Address Correction:

Dr. Bill & Sheila McKelvie
76 Notre Dame Drive
St. John's, NF
A1E 5W4

Readers Write

I was so moved by the articles, "Fear to Joy at Christmas" by S. Jakus and the "Worship: Christmas Gifts" by Rosemary Doran in the November/December 2008 *Glad Tidings*, that we had our whole family participate in these stories on Christmas day at our home.

When I was telling my nine-year-old grandson Sam that I wanted him to choose which part he would like to read, he said, "Who is going to be watching this?"

I replied, "It is just for our family so you will know the true meaning of Christmas."

He looked the parts over and decided he would read the shepherd's story.

We also really enjoyed "Christmas Gifts" as we parcelled out the parts to the folks who really fit the part.

On Christmas day, my nine-year-old grandson said to me, "I only had one reading, can we do this again next year?"

Just a little story of appreciation from one of your subscribers, keep up the good work, it is much appreciated.

~taken from a letter by Beverly Cassel

Cake by the Lake

On the occasion of Camp Kintail's 80th Anniversary,
we are inviting the women of the WMS to: Cake by the Lake

Tuesday, June 23rd, 2009
11a.m.–3 p.m.

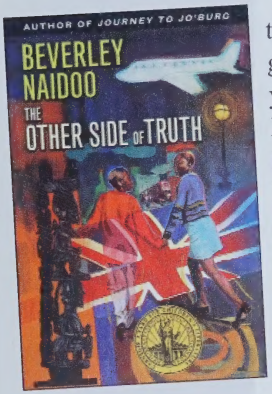
In recognition of the long-standing support of the WMS, Camp Kintail would like to say thank you by hosting a celebration at the camp. Everyone is welcome to come for lunch, crafts, campfire, tours, and worship. Come and experience the Christian community at Kintail again!

CAMP KINTAIL

For more information, please contact Rev. Theresa McDonald-Lee (Camp Director) at 519-235-3701 or trillium@campkintail.ca. Please RSVP by Monday, June 15, 2009.

Book Reviews

The Other Side of Truth
by Beverley Naidoo
Reviewed by Judith Farris



In this novel, a twelve-year-old girl, Sade, and her younger brother, Femi, escape their home country of Nigeria and become refugees to London, England. The novel is a work of fiction, but the realities that it describes are very real. The author, Beverly Naidoo, draws on her own experience of being exiled from South Africa in 1965 after taking part in political resistance.

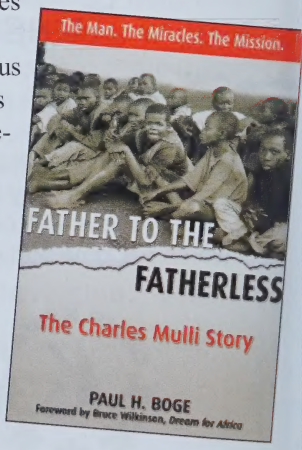
In this book, the children's journalist father openly critiques the corrupt military government, putting himself and his family at risk. Through his struggles, the reader observes how high the cost of speaking truth can be. Naidoo sensitively imagines the confusion of a child refugee when Sade is forced to navigate the city of London and its social service system.

This book was written for young adults, but it is a worthwhile read for adults as well. Each day, many children around the world are forced to become refugees, and this story effectively describes some of the challenges they face. It provides a vivid and compelling view from a child's perspective into the effects of government corruption.

Father to the Fatherless: The Charles Mulli Story
by Paul H. Boge
Reviewed by Judith Farris

Father to the Fatherless tells the true story of how Charles Mulli overcame the neglect and abuse of his childhood in Kenya to become a successful entrepreneur and a leader within the church. He then felt called to sacrifice all the wealth he gained to help children on the streets of Kenya who feel as worthless as he felt when he was a child.

Charles and his wife Esther opened their home to children from the street and later built and operated an orphanage and school for street children. In the process, Charles was part of many miraculous events, such as people's immediate healing from illness and freedom from demon possession. Evidently, many lives have been transformed


The Man. The Miracles. The Mission.
FATHER TO THE FATHERLESS
The Charles Mulli Story
PAUL H. BOGE
Foreword by Bruce Wilkinson, Dream for Africa

because of the work God has done through Charles Mulli and his team.

Readers should be prepared for some graphic violence in this book. The book describes how Charles' father was beaten, almost to death, in accordance with the village council's justice system. The situation was transformed when Charles graciously intervened, but the violence was very real. Acts of violence against women and children are narrated in detail in the account of Charles' childhood and in the stories of the children he befriended.

Funds raised through the sale of this book are donated to the Mulli Children's Family Orphanage.

No Salvation Outside the Poor: Prophetic-Utopian Essays
by Jon Sobrino
Reviewed by Patricia Anne Elford

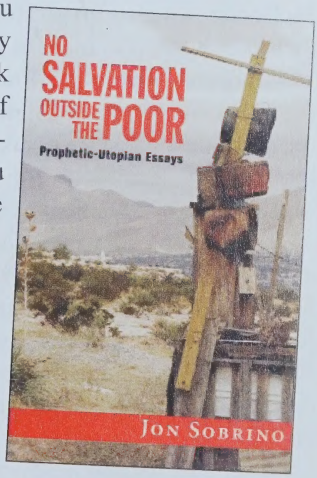
It definitely isn't badly written. It certainly doesn't lack substance and information, but I don't like this book! Why?

No Salvation Outside the Poor makes me aware of my own lack of substance and my own ignorance concerning a sizable chunk of the Christian world. This Spanish-born Jesuit theologian's essay collection doesn't harangue me. It tells me, in ways I can understand (despite a few unfamiliar Latin and Spanish terms), things I'd rather not know; to know them, *requires* contemplation and action.

If you thought you understood all about "the poor," as revealed in the Bible and tradition, you're in for a surprise. You aren't going to find lengthy biblical quotes, but this book is, without doubt, biblically-based. The Scriptures are underlined in the beliefs, the living and dying, of the people recorded in it.

Read it in small installments, but be brave enough to read it. You *will* be sorry and you *won't* be sorry that you did.

Rather than advise you about *how to use* this book, I'd recommend that you prayerfully let the book *use you*. If that happens, you won't be the same, nor will God's wider world. I promise.



THE Book Room
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bookroom@presbyterian.ca

Synodical

The **Synodical of Quebec & Eastern Ontario** held their Fall meeting on September 25 at the Presbyterian Church in Moose Creek. After coffee and muffins, the Rev. Jim and Brenda Patterson led the 60 participants in a lively hymn sing. The Rev. Jim Ferrier welcomed the group, and Lois Klempa, president, led the devotions. After roll call, Druse Bryan, WMS National President, brought greetings from the head office. During announcements, Henny Donkersteeg read a thank you note from Raquel Ramos, Dieudonne Asanji, Aisling Boomgaardt, and Sara McIlveen who received support for their mission trip to India in June.

Margaret Reynolds, President of the Brockville Presbyterial, introduced the morning's guest speakers, the Rev. Dr. Donald MacKay and the Rev. Marion Barclay-MacKay. They spoke of the work they had done in Ghana, with the assistance of Presbyterians Sharing, to upgrade the dorm rooms, furniture, kitchen, and sanitary facilities for the students. Genevieve Holding thanked the MacKays for their inspiring presentation.

After a wonderful lunch, the Pattersons led the singing of some African spiritual songs with several part harmony.

Brenda Patterson introduced Gloria Wasacase, the afternoon speaker. Gloria taught at the Cecilia Jeffrey School and spoke of the spirit of love and caring that was within its walls. She spoke of the good things that had been done. Questions were asked and answered, and then Grace Thornley-Brown thanked Gloria Wasacase for her most interesting insights.

Christine Ball and Anita Mack led an aboriginal-type worship service based on the medicine wheel, the four cardinal directions, and the four sacred colours. The meeting closed with the singing of, "For the Beauty of the Earth," and prayer.

Vivian Young

Presbyterial

Westminster Presbyterial held its annual Christmas luncheon at Gordon Church, Burnaby. It turned out to be anything but ordinary!

The executive decided that each would bring a part of the meal, and Betty McLagan was bringing the ham which Betty Siverns had bought. (Betty Siverns had the flu.) We were waiting at the church for the ham to arrive when we got a phone call from a policeman stating that Betty had been involved in a car accident and she was on the way to the hospital. He also stated that she was so concerned at not getting the ham to us that he offered to bring it himself! He was immediately called a hero, stayed for lunch, and one of the women wrote a poem to thank him.

We hear so many negative stories, that it is good to have a positive one!

Betty McLagan suffered a broken bone in her neck, but did not require surgery and returned home to her daughter's to recover after a week in hospital. She will be wearing a neck collar for an indefinite time, but is in amazing spirits.

The singing of Carols, the reciting of an old CGIT Candlelight Service, and some poems rounded out the event.

We have a hero among us today,
We'll call him Darren the giver,
He came to us with ham in hand
Worth more to us than a tooney!

Not only did he comfort Betty
Who was involved in a crash,
But brought us the ham when
Betty pleaded
So we offered him some of our
mashed...
Potatoes, (they really were
scalloped.)

So our thanks to you, our hero, for
helping us out,
You're now down in history --
For rescuing Betty and bringing
the ham
To our annual Christmas Tea.

Sheila Jakus

Historic Glenview Presbyterian Church in Toronto was the setting for the Christmas meeting of the **East Toronto Presbyterial** on November 29.

Katherine Allen and Anna Cook began the meeting with a hymn sing featuring many favourite carols. The Rev. Mary Campbell brought a message of hope and healing, reminding us to trust in the faithfulness of God.

During a service to mark the closing of WMS groups in Armour Heights, Glebe, and Glenview, representatives

President's Itinerary

March 2–4	Life and Mission Agency Meeting at Crieff Hills
March 14	Montreal Presbyterial at Robert Campbell Taiwanese Church
March 22–24	Assembly Council Meeting at Crieff Hills
April 17	Quebec & Eastern Ontario Synodical, Smith Falls

President, Druse Bryan, helping pick beets at the Terra Dei Foundation Model Farm, Ukraine, during a WMS mission trip to Eastern Europe.

were invited to speak. Audrey Nettleton, Florence Ross, and Kay Flynn each gave a brief history of their group, assuring us that their church will continue to promote and support mission.

The Rev. Jeff Loach, Central Ontario District Director of the Canadian Bible Society, was the guest speaker. He gave a brief history of the Canadian Bible Society and outlined its mission. Jeff encouraged everyone to read the Bible every day expecting God to speak to you—He will!

The members of the Glenview Women's Association were thanked for their hospitality and a time of fellowship was enjoyed during lunch.

Eleanor Keith

Niagara Presbyterial held their Spring meeting at Knox, Dunnville.

Knox, Welland, conducted worship. Geoff and Mary Lou Johnston gave a presentation on the work of the Christian church in Central America, where Knox, Dunnville, has sent work teams for the past several years. The presentation included a stirring rendition of the song, "A Bicycle Built for Two." The message was summed up by our singing a paraphrase of Isaiah 42:1–4, written by Geoff after his first visit to El Salvador, and the comment that, "gentle work is being done by Christians in Central America in imitation of the servant in Isaiah."

Jacqueline Fletcher gave a report from the Synodical.

In June, 40 members and one visitor enjoyed a picnic. St. Andrews, in Beamsville, hosted the gathering and we held our potluck lunch on the shady lawn of the Baptist church across the street. Business was kept to a minimum and we enjoyed fellowship and a couple of interesting and educational games.

Our Fall rally took the form of a potluck lunch at North Pelham church. North Pelham WMS ladies celebrated their 90th anniversary by sharing a special cake with the assembled group. After lunch, the president, Christine Cummings, constituted the meeting with prayer. Ladies from Kirk-on-the-Hill conducted the worship service.

Mary Lou Johnston introduced our special guests, the Rev. Dr. Donald MacKay and the Rev. Marion Barclay MacKay, who spoke of the two years they had spent in Ghana working at the Lay Training Centre in Nsaba. A slide show, and their colourful Kenti cloth garments, illustrated their interesting commentary.

We were told how grants from Presbyterian Sharing had been used to make life at the centre much easier for those who work and study there.

Early October saw the Presbyterials' 26th Annual Crieff Retreat. Since we had neglected to mark our 25th last year, it was decided to have a belated celebration. The theme of the retreat was, "Do unto others…The Golden Rule." The theme song for the two-day event was, "Silver and Gold." Twenty-two

ladies attended and the Rev. Pearl Varsarhelyi led the workshops.

A Silver Anniversary cake was cut by current Presbyterial President, Christine Cummings, assisted by Edythe Phillips, and Shirley Barnhart, the only two present who had attended the first retreat 26 years ago.

The Mary & Martha Society of St. Andrew's, Strathroy, held its 6th annual Christmas Extravaganza on November 30. The mission for this year was bricks for Jobat and enough money was raised to purchase 90 bricks! Pictured beside the "wall of bricks" are Hilde Morden (President), Joan Wagner (Past President), Virginia Campbell (Secretary and Extravaganza organizer), and Kathy Boose (Treasurer).

The congregation of Renfrew Presbyterian Church recently sent our cheque for $9935.00 to be used to help build a new hostel at Jobat Christian School in India. In order to reach this amount, our Dr. Margaret O'Hara Auxiliary of the WMS matched the amount the congregation donated.

Back row left to right: Mary-Lynn McConnachie, Cassie McGregor, Jane Roseboom, Joan Hilliaard, Peggy Putnam, Marion VanderPloeg. Seated: Betty Zwiers, Isabel Wallace (charter member). Missing from photo: Frances Lockwood (charter member), Scott Reynolds

In Memoriam

Agnes Hislop

God, in His mercy, called Agnes home on November 14.

Agnes had a deep faith that will be a consolation to many of her friends and family at this time.

Agnes served God in missions in northern India with The Presbyterian Church of Canada, travelled the world, loved music, valued her friendships, and enjoyed good health and independence until very recently. Agnes recently moved to the Northcott Centre, in Ponoka, AB, and found the staff caring and compassionate. She was fully involved with activities, made friends, and seemed very happy. She was still completely mobile and able to take care of many things herself. Close friends had visited her in recent weeks.

In a letter from Jobat Christian Hospital, where Agnes served, Dr. H. Wilson, Medical Superintendent, thanked the Lord for the 30 years Agnes served in the Vindhya and Satpura area. The superintendent said that Agnes was always "helpful to young staff and nursing students in spiritual matters." She was known to be always smiling and talking.

Agnes is survived by nieces Joanne and Tracy, nephews Stephen, Mark, and David, and cousin, Murray.

A Memorial Service will be held for Agnes in the Spring.

Flora MacPherson

Flora MacPherson's life was celebrated at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Cardigan, Prince Edward Island, on April 8, 2008. Flora was described as a person with deep faith who lived it fully; she was kind and gentle and blessed with a great sense of humour, and a contagious laugh.

She will be remembered by several women who were students at the Presbyterian Missionary and Deaconess Training School in Toronto, where Flora was employed as a housekeeper in the 1950s and 1960s. Because of the family-style nature of the houses, Flora mingled with the staff and students and became well known to the residents. She was, by nature, fun-loving, supportive, and hard working.

Flora eventually moved to a new job in the WMS offices where she had bookkeeping responsibilities and other work in connection with *Glad Tidings*.

Forward in Faith

For the past several years, WMS grants have been made available for lay people (both men and women) to assist in attending special leadership development courses or mission exposure trips.

The *Isabella Brown Memorial Fund for Leadership Development* was set up by the family of the late Isabella Brown of Manotick and Cardinal, Ontario. Mrs. Brown, as well as serving as president of her local group, the Presbyterial, and Synodical, led CGIT and children's groups in her local congregation. In order to help meet her concern for developing leadership for groups of the church, this fund was established to provide financial assistance for lay people of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

We give thanks to God for the family of Isabella Brown who have made such grants available; however, the funds are almost exhausted. The WMS is convinced that such a fund must continue to encourage and support lay people to receive leadership training and mission exposure tour grants.

Ms Giollo Kelly, my predecessor who was treasurer of the national WMS, remembered the WMS in her will. Her interest in the WMS and especially in encouraging lay people will continue. The WMS has established the ***Giollo Kelly Memorial Leadership Development Fund*** in memory of Giollo.

An amount of up to $400 may be granted to an individual to attend a leadership training event internationally or $200 for an event being held in Canada or the USA. These courses will equip the individual for some aspect of Christian service. Please note the following guidelines:

- The recipient must be a member or adherent of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and will be prepared to utilize the new skill or knowledge in some specified manner in his/her congregation. Lay and clergy receiving continuing education grants are not eligible.
- The recipient will be expected to make a personal financial contribution.
- The recipient will be expected to report back in writing to the WMS office.
- The grant can be used to take a leadership course or attend an event, e.g., at Knox College, Presbyterian College, or Vancouver School of Theology, Crieff Hills, or other organization whose theological and educational stance is in keeping with The Presbyterian Church in Canada.
- Repeated grants are not available for at least three years.
- Applications should be made at least six weeks prior to the event

Application forms are available from the Executive Director, Sarah Kim, at skim@presbyterian.ca

Wilma Welsh, Treasurer

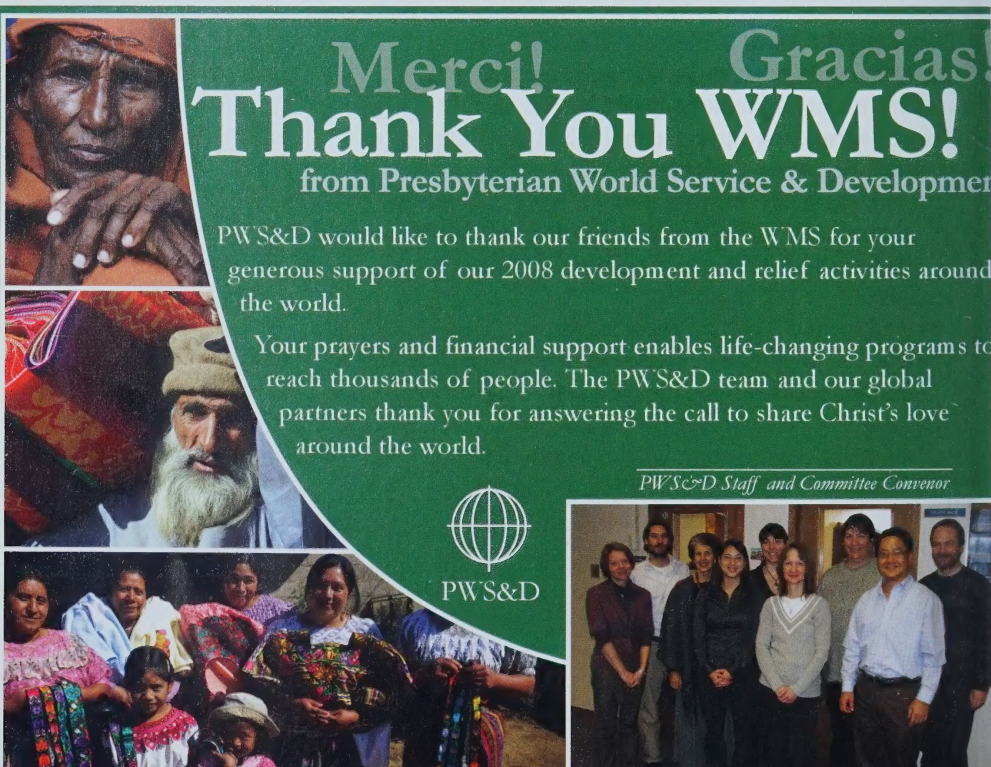
Circulation News

Katherine Allen

Thank you to all the *Glad Tidings* secretaries/contact persons for returning the subscription lists in good time.

For our readers, please note:

1) When you receive the magazine, please check your address for accuracy. Canada Post requires either a box number or street address to be included in your address.
2) If you know of someone who has difficulty reading, *Glad Tidings* is available on audiocassette tape. Your group could take the tape to shut-ins in your congregation or a senior's home. There is no charge for the audio version of *Glad Tidings*, but a contribution of $14.00 can be made, if desired, to offset production costs.
3) A large print edition is also available for those who have difficulty reading *Glad Tidings*, at a cost of $14.00.
4) If you are moving, please notify us at least six weeks before you move. If possible, please include the address label from your magazine. Also notify the *Glad Tidings* secretary for your congregation so that she can make the change in her files.
5) How do you share your *Glad Tidings*? We are looking for new promotional ideas for the magazine. If you have a good idea, let us know.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Gracias!
Thank You WMS!
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PWS&D would like to thank our friends from the WMS for your generous support of our 2008 development and relief activities around the world.
Your prayers and financial support enables life-changing programs to reach thousands of people. The PWS&D team and our global partners thank you for answering the call to share Christ's love around the world.
PWS&D Staff and Committee Convenor
PWS&D

PASS ME ALONG:

Sharing your *Glad Tidings* is a great way to promote the WMS, and to promote *Glad Tidings*. When you are finished with your copy, encourage …

An artist to read, Christ's Living Journey (p.17)

Your Mission Committee Chair to read, Caring Alliance (p.10)

Your Church Librarian to read, Book Reviews (p.38)

IN REMEMBRANCE

Dorothy Hill
St. Andrew's, Bolsover, ON

Lillian Elsie Dolson
Union Presbyterian, Georgetown, ON

Mrs. Mary Irvine
Knox, Fingal, ON

Lucy Greaves
Marjorie Ireland
St. Andrews WMS, Huntsville, ON

Mrs. Margaret McKee
St. Andrew's WMS, Kingston, ON

Doris Lovelock
Calvin Presbyterian Church, Kitchener, Ontario

Mrs. Doris McGee
Helen Hoggarth
New St. James Presbyterian WMS, London ON

Velma Wells
Agnes McDougall
Heather Club, Knox Presbyterian, Neepawa, MB

Marjorie Smith
Chippawa Presbyterian Church, Niagara Falls, ON

Mrs. Jean G. Mitchell
St. Andrew's Presbyterian, Southampton, ON

Verna Wilson
Thornhill WMS, Thornhill, ON

Katherine MacKinnon
Knox WMS, Walkerton, ON

Dorothy Case
Knox, Welland, ON

Mrs. Janet Etches,
St. John's, White Rock, BC

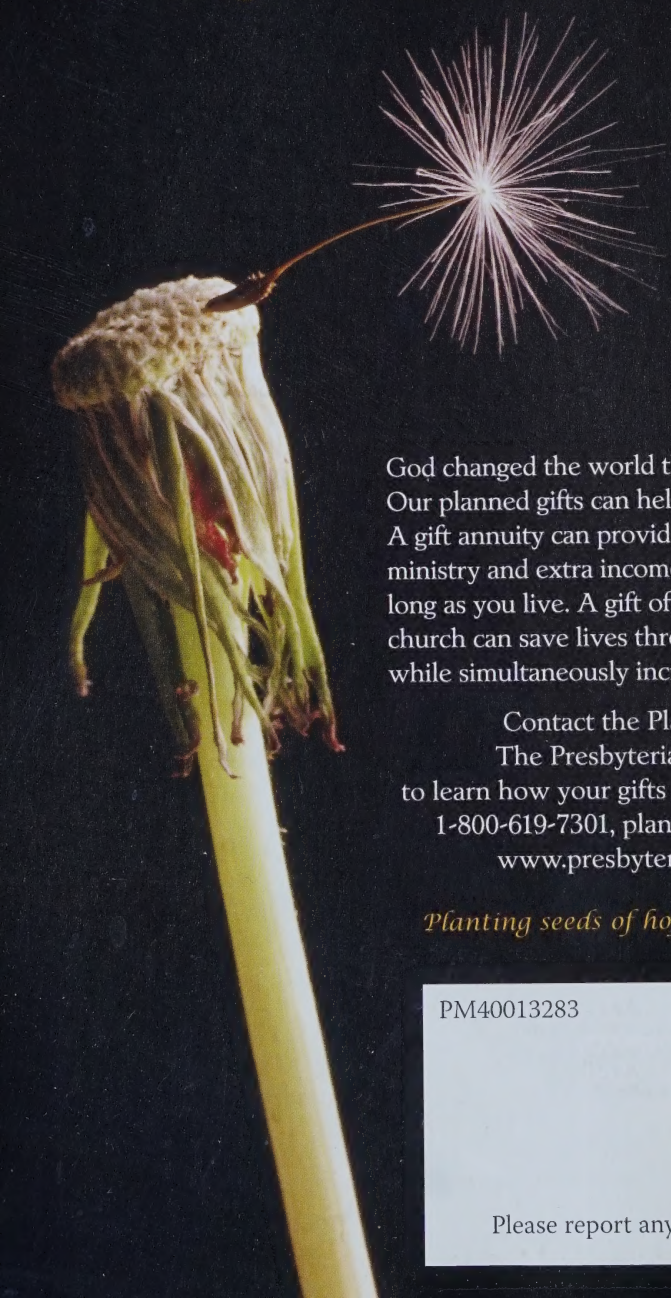
Jean Duncan
Peggy Whitmarsh
Willowdale, Toronto, ON

Robina Vince
Miriam Yari
St. Andrew's Presbyterian Women's Association, Fonthill, ON

Jean Crossan
Elizabeth Lyle WMS, Central, Hamilton, ON

Names for In Remembrance can be sent by post or email. Please ensure names are typed or clearly written, and include your WMS group name (or congregation) and location.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only son...



None of us leaves this life without having given everything away – to someone, somewhere.

The only question for us is this: to whom do we want to bequeath the wealth God has entrusted to us?

God changed the world through God's planned gift. Our planned gifts can help change the world, too. A gift annuity can provide seed money for a new youth ministry and extra income for you and your spouse as long as you live. A gift of stock given directly to the church can save lives through PWS&D's relief work while simultaneously increasing the tax benefits to you.

Contact the Planned Giving Office,
The Presbyterian Church in Canada,
to learn how your gifts can make a lasting difference.
1-800-619-7301, plannedgiving@presbyterian.ca
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May/June 2009

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Glad Tidings reports on aspects of the Women's Missionary Society on all levels.

Glad Tidings challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally, and internationally.

Glad Tidings through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired, and motivated to action.

GladTidings provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters, and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS or by the Editor.

Colleen Wood

From the Editor's Desk

I really enjoyed reading the articles for this month's *Glad Tidings* as they came in. Although I have thought a lot about vocation, I realized that I have tended to think of it as someone entering my early work and life years.

Recently, I have thought of vocation in terms of where I am now. You see, I never set out to work for the Women's Missionary Society. I didn't even set out to work for the Church, yet that is where I have spent the vast majority of my working years. It was only upon finding myself working for the Church, that I began to consider vocation at all. Up to that point, I had always considered what job I might perform when I got older, but never, what would I be doing vocational? The two things are very different things.

Work is what you might do, what you might even be good at, but it is not necessarily where God has called you to be. Vocation is a spiritual concept looking at each of us as God's beautiful creation. It is an inner recognition of what we will do and become, and an outer confirmation from our community. It is more than just a call to work, but is often a call to lifestyle—to singlehood, to marriage, to children, to retirement. It is the task of glorifying God in all the roles that we are called to perform.

So, how did I end up in ministry? Like many in non-ordained ministry, I found myself in the position because of a call from a community. This was before any inner recognition of the call. In looking back, it is amazing how God had worked my education, my experience, my upbringing, and my connections together to work for the good of my calling. Since then I have accepted a call to the vocation of non-ordained ministry, a call to be a wife, and a call to be a mother—perhaps the most challenging of them all.

This month, I have had the opportunity to consider what might come later in my life. June Campbell and Joyce Davis made me think forward a few years to the joys and challenges that may come. When you are young, or even middle aged, the only thoughts you may have on retirement are how you will pay for it! But, these articles open up the many opportunities that retirement may hold.

continued on page 13

Stop, Look, Listen, and ...

by Joyce Davis

The request to write an article about retirement pushed me into reviewing what the past five years have been like. First it was "STOP!" I was really tired and glad to leave many responsibilities behind, but it seemed such a strange and unfocused time. Surely there were things I *should* be doing!

That's when I began to try to "LOOK" at my life differently. Perhaps it was okay to have an empty calendar, to relax and let each day develop slowly, to be more spontaneous and not feel so duty-bound to accomplish things. However, to be honest, it's still hard to relax and not put those expectations upon myself. When I see needs at church or elsewhere that I might have responded to in earlier years, I have to remind myself that God intends me to pay attention to my present energy reserves and make use of an important little word—no—even to myself!

This is where the "LISTEN" comes in. I keep building on my lifelong habit of taking some time each day to focus, even briefly, on a passage of scripture. I'm trying to be more alert to discerning the ways in which God is directing my thoughts and decisions. When the day is not starting in a rush, I enjoy lying lazily in comfort in bed, "thinking in God's presence." Perhaps I reflect on happenings from the previous day, or the one that is just starting, or on any current "itch" or puzzle in my life. A friend describes this practice as looking for things which stir up energy or drain it. What is God showing me here? What guidance is God giving me through this delight, this itch, or this pain?

So I'm trying to practise this process of discernment: "stop, look, listen, and …." After that ellipsis (those three dots) comes the final step—*believing* that what I hear within my thoughts is really God speaking to me. Of course, I seek confirmation of those ideas, but I try to move forward and build on them. For instance, these promptings led me to offer to lead a six-week study group on spiritual practices in January. At another time, when the need was expressed to revive our dormant church library, I discerned a leap of interest within me. Now, seven of us are enjoying working as a team on this project.

I pray that you ... find delight in relaxing and thinking in God's presence and then acting on what God shows you.

Answers don't necessarily come easily, but as they evolve and grow within me, confidence in God's constant guiding presence gives me much joy. I pray that you, the reader, will be increasingly able to let go of your self-imposed expectations and find delight in relaxing and thinking in God's presence and then acting on what God shows you.

Joyce Davis is both a diaconal and ordained minister. She and her husband, Glen, retired from team ministry at Knox, Agincourt, in January 2003. To Joyce's surprise, when God called Glen to work with Presbyterian students at the Vancouver School of Theology in 2006, a half-time job suddenly opened for her as well. She is enjoying being the Director of Field Education for students from several denominations.

A Vision to Serve

The Rev. Mary Fontaine, like many of us, grew up in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. What makes Mary more distinct is that she is also a Cree from the Mistawasis First Nation in Saskatchewan. The church that is part of her, and her people's history, is Mistawasis Memorial Presbyterian Church. It began in response to a request from Treaty Six Chief Mistawasis who sought out missionaries to set up a school at Snake Plain, later named Mistawasis after the revered. Chief John MacKay, a buffalo hunter from Ireland, responded to the call and became a headman and a friend of the Chief and his people in the 1870s.

What also makes Mary Fontaine distinct is the ministry which she founded and now serves as its director —Hummingbird Ministries. The vision for this ministry was inspired by Mary's parents, Douglas and Dora Head of Mistawasis. Her father would say, "Nitanis (my girl), our people suffer a lot, get an education and travel and maybe one day you can help our people in some way." After four years in the Native Studies program at the University of Alberta, Mary finally understood the pain with which her father spoke and the love he had for his people. This is when she understood the call for social and political justice for First Nations people and why the healing of Aboriginal people is one of the main objectives of the ministries.

Mary's mother loved her people and the Lord and challenged her Presbyterian ministers about the Bible and the Cree culture. She asked deep theological questions of the late Rev. Stephen Howe, things he said that no one could answer and she would get frustrated and say, "But Mr. Howe, this is your Bible, why don't you know?!" Mary's mom knew that there were some beautiful things about her people and their culture and that these gifts were from God. She knew that the Lord Jesus loved and accepted the Cree and she couldn't understand why the church she loved would reject everything about their culture. Like her mom, Mary began to see the beauty of her culture and to ask questions as her mother did. Thus

began a journey of spiritual and cultural discernment to reconcile her faith with her culture—a journey guided by the Holy Spirit and her studies at Vancouver School of Theology in the Native Ministries Program. Mary is passionate about the spiritual and emotional healing of her people and of the relationship between Aboriginal people and the Church, the second main objective of Hummingbird Ministries.

When Mary graduated from the Vancouver School of Theology in 2003, she wanted to start an Aboriginal ministry instead of searching for a regular church to minister to. Life experience, and the influence of others, added to her vision from her parents, and this led to the birth and development of Hummingbird Ministries. In the fledgling years funding was one of the main challenges. Mary's response was, "This is not about money. It's not a job. It's my life, my mission, my purpose in life!" Funding support was not the only challenge, but no matter how difficult things got, she refused to give up the vision because she believed it was from the Lord!

She remains grateful to all of God's people who walked with her during those times when she sometimes wondered if she would become homeless. Indeed, the Lord is in the vision of Hummingbird Ministries and her calling is one that she is particularly suited to and prepared for, not only gifted by God, but also inspired by her family, her upbringing, her people, her faith, and her friends at the WMS. Mary says the final inspiration came from her friends at the Westminster Presbyterial who heard her vision for ministry at their annual Camp Douglas retreat and told her this was too important a ministry not to do it. With that came the first donations for Hummingbird Ministries. WMS women were the first to give a $2000 donation. The women continued to support her monthly through individual donations and she also received a $1500 donation from the national WMS. With the blessing of the PCC women, Mary knew this was definitely a "God-thing."

Mary's passion for this ministry also had timing on her side. The Confession of the Presbyterian Church in Canada to the Aboriginal people had already outlined the theology and the sentiments needed to make this type of ministry credible and acceptable to Presbyterians in general. This, along with Mary's vision and diligence, saw the ministry, with the support of Canada Ministries,

become a reality. The ministry was originally a program of the Central Presbyterian Church in Vancouver, but in February 2007 the ministry became a ministry of the Presbytery of Westminster. She counts this as a blessing of the Lord. Many others have also supported her along the journey—the Coast Salish people, church people, Presbyterians, and others. They have affirmed her calling to this ministry and to her vision. She continues to receive support through the committed and supportive Hummingbird Ministries Council—another special blessing.

Of course, Mary has also worked through formal training to prepare her. Mary graduated with a BA in Native Studies from the University of Alberta in Edmonton. Mary was then certified as a student at VST. She became a student minister at her own home congregation of Mistawasis Memorial Presbyterian Church where she served for four years, while completing her Masters of Divinity from VST in 2003.

The first circles of Hummingbird Ministries took place at the Tsawwassen First Nation in Delta, BC, but other circles and ministries include: Madeira Park and Roberts Creek on the Sunshine Coast, Sechelt First Nation, Surrey, Richmond, and Vancouver. Mary says, "We go where the people are, where the needs are for healing and healing and reconciliation between Aboriginal people and the Church. We are committed to 'walking with' Aboriginal people as God's people in their healing journeys as identified by them. We also do ministry presentations at various churches throughout the year to bridge the gap between the cultures and promote good neighbourly love between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people."

After many years in this work, finally, in May 2008, Mary was ordained to Hummingbird Ministries. Her ordination took place at Mistawasis. Mary says, "For my ordination, I had dreamed about being honoured and blessed by both my people and my church and that the ceremony would include both the Presbyterian Church culture and the Cree culture." It did! The robing included Presbyterian ordination dress and a special gift of a stole by

Rev. George Yando. From her people she received a beautiful starblanket which her family draped over her shoulders as part of the ceremony. What an honour! Other cultural aspects included Lakota and Coast Salish drum songs. Mary says, "This was a very special occasion and I am honoured to be the first Presbyterian minister of Mistawasis and the first full-blooded Aboriginal woman in Canada to become a Presbyterian minister."

As with any vocation, there are ups and downs. One highlight Mary had was baptizing her grandson, Talon, on the same day as her ordination. She has also enjoyed working with the children, and being accepted by the Tsawwassen First Nation as their community pastor for funerals and prayer services. This has taken time as it is usually men who lead these services. Finally, she speaks of the joy of witnessing individuals who come from a place of pain to a place of peace—emotionally and spiritually. "The Lord is the healer," says Mary, "I am just there to listen, to be a witness of God's love, and to bring the neighbourly love of the Westminster Presbytery and The Presbyterian Church in Canada."

The challenges include some of the social and political problems which we have no answer for. Sometimes these challenges include prejudice at the schools, racial prejudice, poverty, and relationships that have gone awry due to the loss of cultural and community values of the First Nations people. Sometimes the problem is legal and involves the justice department but in all these ways, the PCC "walks with" Aboriginal people as God's people through Hummingbird Ministries. Mary also deals with muscle and tissue pain due to an accident she had a couple of years ago.

God gifts us all for the ministries that we are called to, and Mary is certainly gifted for her ministry with the Hummingbird Ministries.

Much of this article also appears in Women's Perspective. Other sources include the Ordination Service bulletin for Mary's ordination, the Hummingbird Ministries' website, and the website of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

by June Campbell

Retirement!? "You want me to do what? You must be joking! Oh! I guess you didn't realize —I'm retired, so I'm very busy. One more thing to do! One more activity! Well, yes, I'll consider it."

My sister's landlady told her when she was still a teenager, "The way to keep interest in life as you grow older (old) is to have too much to do." Certainly, if that's the mandate, I know I'm fulfilling it, and see many others do so around me—especially within the faith community—fulfilling it, often joyfully, sometimes tired and wondering why I agreed to do this, but always out of necessity— prayerfully.

I tore out, to have in front of me, the last paragraph of the Rev. Dr. Joseph McLelland's reply in *The Presbyterian Record* (October 2008) to a letter about procrastination in school assignments from Erin Woods. The application does not change in retirement,

> "So: Relax, Erin, (June, Doris, Gladys, Shirley) each day has enough trouble (Jesus) so you might as well rejoice always (Paul). "What do you have that you did not receive?" Surely the answer is, "Nothing, that's why life's so funny!" So begin each day with nothing (a sort of Christian Zen?), and accept its tasks with a light heart and open mind. That's your vocation, and also your grace and your glory."

Isn't that something? That I, at 72 (and 1/2— as a little one would say) need, can deeply benefit from, the same admonition as young Erin has received. Wisdom is for all ages, n'est ce pas?

There are, of course, elements that play into our decisions in retirement—health, wealth, temperament, and attitude among them, as well as general relationships with those around us.

Health:

Our Dad used to say, "If you have your health, you have everything!" This is a little exaggerated, but with truth in it. There are so many degrees of health and ill-health. Whereas I can claim good health, I have friends who are struggling with Alzheimer's, aphasia, arthritis, cancer, and Parkinson's. For those of us with good health it is from a sense of love and friendship that we 'are present' as much as possible for those whose quality of life is threatened. It becomes, also, our own joy as we get to experience the inner strength and faith of these dear friends whose physical health is far less than desired.

Wealth:

Travelling can be an extremely rewarding part of retirement, but its availability is determined by financial means as well as health. Hobbies, activities we've aspired to do for many years, but without the time to accomplish them, can also be regulated by the amount of money required.

Temperament:

Although there is such an enormous range of activities in which we might participate, that limitless list can sometimes be shortened by sheer timidity. Paul states in II Timothy 2:7, "For God has not given us the spirit of fear (timidity NSV), but of power, of love, and of a sound mind (self-discipline NSV)." A Welsh proverb that makes me laugh and absolutely rejoice in life is "Bold designs! Courageous actions! Frequent mistakes!" It is so releasing—urging us to take chances, go on an adventure, accept that challenge, and to do something new. I was told that our Holy Bible contains 365 verses saying, "Do not fear!" in one version or another—one for every precious day of our year(s).

Attitude:

Speaking of laughter—witness The Red Hat Society. They are a group of women who are willing to laugh at themselves and their aging, and to share joyfully with one another. Although there is a place and time for mourning in our lives, there comes a time when we need to heed Nehemiah's injunction to the Israelites in re-building, "Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength."(Nehemiah 8:10). I do believe that, given soundness of mind and emotions (even without physical strength), laughter can well up in us quite readily in later years precisely because we have come through so much, seen the worst (and sometimes experienced it), the best, and the in-between. We can still know that, under God, we have the right to joy and laughter as He fills us with His love and acceptance of ourselves as He made us and for those He places in our lives.

Relationships:

This goes along well with compassion. It is now well-proven that loneliness affects our immune systems. So, where we realize that is happening in another, there is an opportunity for following our Lord's orders in retirement as we care for one another. It may mean helping to bring new life to a grieving friend with the example of Anna, the widow who waited patiently with purpose to see the birth of the Messiah. She had known sorrow, yet did not become bitter, keeping her contact with God, drawing from her devout relationship with Him, causing her to live in hope, not despair.

Balance may be a constant challenge as we live this rich life called retirement—as we laugh with children, volunteer in church, community, or hospital, visit, travel, or enjoy music, reading, writing, physical exercise, and crafts—all such experiences deepened as we explore an intimate relationship with God in Christ. May God help us daily to fulfill that precept of "accepting each day's tasks with a light heart and open mind as our continuing vocation, and also our grace and our glory." (McLelland) Such can be our life in retirement!

Pentecost

by James Phillips

Asia	New wine
Cyrene	Parthia
Fire	Pentecost
Holy Spirit	Peter
Jerusalem	Pontus
Jesus	Power
Jews	Rome
Joel	Tongues
Judea	Wind
Medes	Wonder

P O N T U S R P A T
N E W W I N E I I M
A E N E R Y C R H E
E S W T S T I E T L
D E I A E P R W R A
U U N A S C J O A S
J G D Y I P O P P U
I N L F I R E S S R
W O N D E R L T T E
H T J E W S U S E J
M B T S E D E M O R

Use the extra letters to spell a phrase (answer on page 45)

Editorial
from page 3

This month, I also enjoyed an update on the life and work of the Rev. Mary Fontaine. I had the opportunity to meet Mary many years ago when she was serving the congregation of Mistawasis and I was preparing a Youth In Mission trip to Mistawasis. As she took me through the First Nations community of Mistawasis, the love and respect that the people had for Mary was evident. Her passion for them was also evident. Mary has taken that passion, along with past influences and more recent education, and created Hummingbird Ministries. Creating your own vocation just might be what God is calling you to do.

We also hear from Barb Summers, Communications Coordinator for PWS&D, this month. Barb's passion for her work with PWS&D shines through as we experience their work through her recent trip to Africa. Her vocation allows us to hear of the amazing work being done in our name through PWS&D.

Finally, we celebrate and learn about the work of the Order of Diaconal Ministries.

Wherever you are in your life, know that God is with you. God equips and calls each one. Consider how you are serving God in your life today, and consider if God is calling you to something more. How do you serve God in your vocation?

The Best News You'll Hear Today

by Barb Summers

I read a news article recently that despaired about how billions of dollars have been "wasted" on aid for Africa. The article commented that so much money has gone into development without any noticeable progress. The writer was clearly annoyed.

Let's be totally honest. I'm sure each of us has probably experienced the same frustration at one point or another. As we are hit once again with an appeal to help a family from a developing country, as the images of the emaciated and ill fill our television screens, as we are bombarded by news of another famine and the horror faced by too many people, it's no wonder many of us are left feeling frustrated, weary, and overwhelmed.

" … let us not grow weary in doing what is right … " (Galatians 6:9a)

If all we did is watch the news, we would never learn about the progress being made. Apparently good news isn't glamorous enough to make the six o'clock report. But let me tell you about a different reality. This is a reality that many of us don't hear about, but is much more real than even "reality TV."

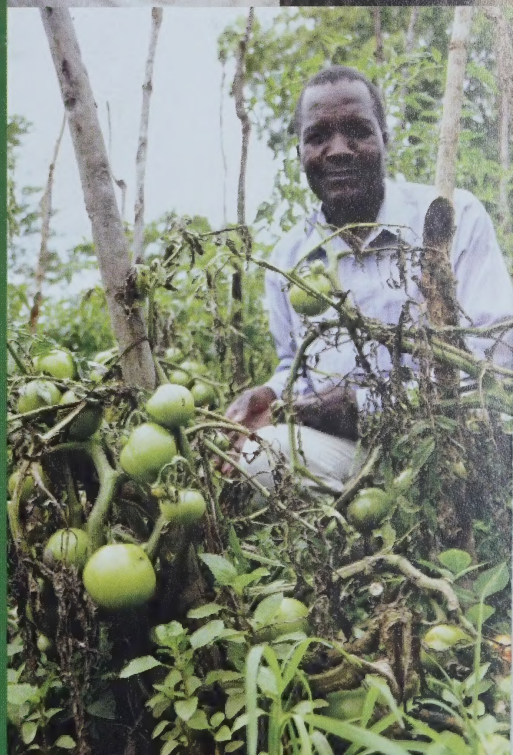
As the Communications Coordinator for Presbyterian World Service & Development, I recently had the opportunity to visit our program partners in Malawi. It was a chance for me to see the work that is happening, interview some of the beneficiaries, then report back on what I saw. For a few weeks, I was your eyes and ears in this small land-locked country and I want you to know that your support, faith, and trust in PWS&D are making a difference—so much more than you know. Let me share with you a few of my experiences.

I walked through fields of lush, full crops that will help families stave off hunger as small-scale farmers are learning how to increase their crop yields.

Livestock programs are providing families with an important source of income and adding protein to their diets.

Entire communities are learning new recipes so they can cook more nutritious meals.

Strangers welcomed me into their homes so they could show me



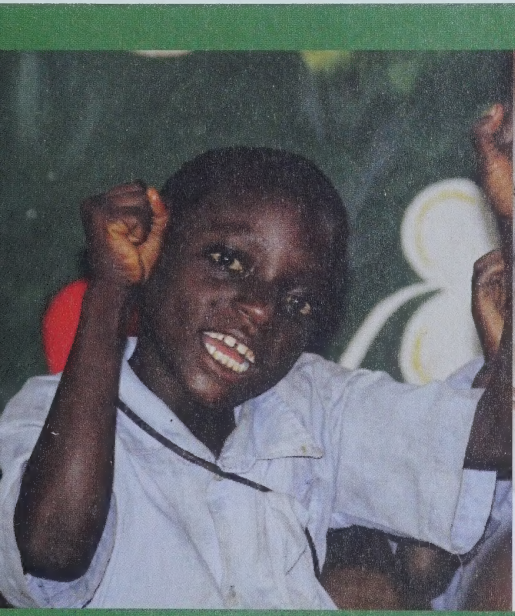
their mosquito bed nets and how it has helped them not only prevent malaria and save lives, but also eliminate lice, flees, cockroaches, and bed bugs.

Samuel Jere, standing with his wife and three small children at the entrance to his humble home, explained that he used to get malaria nine to ten times a year. But then he smiled and said, "Last year I got it only once."

Home-based care workers shared the good news of how they personally watched AIDS patients grow stronger and stronger through improved nutrition, effective medicines, and the loving care and support they receive.

I shared a smile with young AIDS orphans who laughed and played with their teachers in orphan care centres.

A young woman embraced me in a school where their motto is, "Education is Power." The school removes children from the dangers of more urban settings where they are preyed on by "sugar daddies" and allows them to get an education.



A small, healthy baby was placed in my arms and I learned that, despite his mother being HIV positive, he was HIV negative because his mother took part in the program to prevent the transmission of the virus from mother to child.

I have never felt so inspired, motivated, and encouraged in my life. And

these are only a few examples of the countless stories I witnessed. The work happening in Malawi is a far cry from the terrible news we always seem to hear of people starving and suffering. The work of our church through PWS&D is jamming a wrench into the

nations will not go away overnight, but we are part of a real force for change in this world.

Something exciting is happening in our church. Despite the bad news perpetually bombarding us, Presbyterians are actively working together for

spokes of cycles of poverty and together we are journeying into new futures of hope and opportunity.

What I saw and learned in Malawi makes me proud to be a Presbyterian. Our church is responding, despite overwhelming needs, and PWS&D is supporting programs that are making real, sustainable improvements. The needs in Malawi and other developing

something bigger and better. The next time you are presented with images of relentless poverty and despair, please remember that you are only getting half the truth.

I hope this is the best news you will hear today.

Barb Summers is the Communications Coordinator for Presbyterian World Service and Development.

Wrensong

by Jean MacGregor

... see how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labour or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these.
Matthew 6:28–29

Silence. Snow.

A blanket of diamonds embrace the garden as the feathery heads of grasses and my mom's hydrangea rustle gently, humming a melody in the cold wind.

God has sprinkled the snow and bid nature rest as He protects the tiniest bulb and the tallest tree. Through the window, the January sky is dark and dismal, yet there is tender life beneath the snow—miracles. As a new season emerges, God brings forth showers and at His behest winter slips aside and the gentle rains urge new growth. The

beautiful Lenten rose shakes the winter cold from her shoulder and nods her head under the warmth of the sun while the crocus unfurl their petals. The symphony begins. There is a profusion of pastel colour as the garden begins to bloom in a tangled, joyful harmony and perfume floats in the air.

The goldfish appear as the ice melts from the pond and they move slowly as they await warmer days. It is a joy to see that they have come through another winter. The frogs don their brighter colours and the tadpoles swim erratically to the surface as they begin their metamorphosis. Even in this minute place God has kept his vigil, caring even for this tiny ecosystem. Lily pads spread like fans tossed across the water to shelter these creatures from the kingfisher, and the green and blue herons.

Dragonflies, damsel flies, bats, and butterflies fill the air with winged motion. The young bunnies venture out for the first time and chipmunks and squirrels chatter noisily. Here I see the awesome wonder of God's glorious work. He scatters music throughout as the robins return, pulling reeds from the pond for their nests. The orioles, hummingbirds, rose-breasted grosbeaks, indigo buntings, and crested fly-catchers arrive and add their voice to those of the chickadees, blue jays, and cardinals as well as spring peepers and the chorus of frogs. When the tiny house wrens arrive, they melodiously announce themselves at the opening of each new day and busily prepare their nests. I dedicate my garden to them as I thank the Lord for all his blessings.

The leaves of the hosta surely shelter the garden angels as they rest. The bees drone from the foxgloves to the ladybells and wander over the hollyhocks with their legs laden with pollen. Joshua tucks himself under the honeysuckle tree as did Baxter before him, in the cool where he can keep an eye on me as I go about my gardening chores. Here is tranquility, serenity, where one can almost hear the angels tiptoe among the flowers. God's hand is evident in each and every blossom, each blade of grass, be it striped or tipped with colour, and in every note the birds sing. He has blessed me with the gift of caring for this precious space and I think, "Oh Lord my God when I in awesome wonder ...."

The jumble of summer colours is vibrant and there is movement and perfume and song and I thank God for all the beauty. The glory of summer blends into autumn as reds, golds, and oranges present a flamboyant display before the calm settling down in preparation for winter when it will be silent, when a blanket of snow embraces the garden.

Awesome.

"He hath made everything beautiful in his time ..." Ecclesiastes 3:11

Jean MacGregor is the gardener of Wrensong and a member of the St. Andrew's Southampton WMS. Wrensong garden flourished last summer as it has for 23 years. During all that time there has been no use of herbicides of pesticides and God's creatures exist in a quiet and poison-free harmony.

This couple is reading the latest financial news and they are still smiling. . . Why?

Because they can count on guaranteed annual income, mostly tax-free, for the rest of their lives AND they will be leaving a substantial legacy to support vitally needed ministries in The Presbyterian Church in Canada after they die.

Sound too good to be true? Then you haven't heard about **GIFT ANNUITIES.** Call the Planned Giving Office today to learn more about gift annuities and to receive a free gift annuity quote.

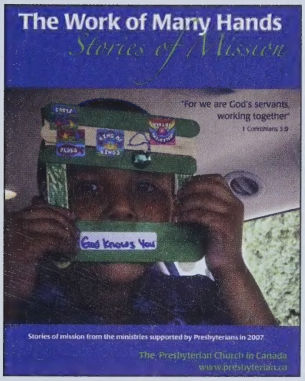
Sample Gift Annuity Quotes:

- A married couple (both 70 years old), acquiring a $20,000 joint gift annuity, would receive an immediate donation receipt of $4,000 and an annuity rate of 5.14% with annual payments of $1,027 (84% tax-free).
- A 75 year old man, acquiring a $20,000 single life gift annuity, would receive an immediate donation receipt of $6,468 and an annuity rate of 6.65% with annual payments of $1,330 (100% tax-free).

(The above figures are for illustrative purposes only. Annuity rates are subject to change.)

Planned Giving Office, The Presbyterian Church in Canada
1-800-619-7301, plannedgiving@presbyterian.ca

Planting seeds of hope. For generations to come.


The Work of Many Hands
Stories of Mission
"For we are God's servants, working together"
1 Corinthians 3:9
God knows You
Stories of mission from the ministries supported by Presbyterians in 2007
The Presbyterian Church in Canada
www.presbyterian.ca

Stories of

by Lynda Reid

Stories of Mission 2008—The Work of Many Hands is a great resource that you can use with your WMS group. Every group has received a copy of this resource, and additional copies can be downloaded from The Presbyterian Church in Canada website (www.presbyterian.ca) under the resources section.

Stories of Mission 2008—The Work of Many Hands is divided into five main sections: Creating New Ministries, Sustaining Ministries, Renewing Ministries, Specialized Ministries, and International Ministries. Choose one section of the book for each meeting. Share the stories of the section with your group in an interesting way, such as:

- Create a dialogue between two or three people.
- Choose to read three or four interesting quotes.
- List the main responsibilities of the person's work on a flip chart.
- Use a map to show where in the world the person is working.
- Print off a photograph of the people in the region from the PCC website photo gallery.
- Have a laptop computer or desktop computer in the room to browse the photo gallery or the website of the ministry.
- Present the story like an 'on-the-spot' interview.
- Who Am I? Have members play a guessing game with the group, each time giving them more information about the mission staff or project.
- Try to not read long sections of the story.

Mission

In order to engage the group, you may ask some of the following questions:

- What intrigued you most about the ministry? The people involved in the ministry?
- Where did you see God's grace, mercy, love, and joy in the ministry?
- After hearing about this ministry, what biblical story or text comes to mind?
- What is your prayer for this ministry?
- What questions do you have for the people involved?
- How could your group or you as an individual support this ministry?

Suggested Scriptures and Hymns:

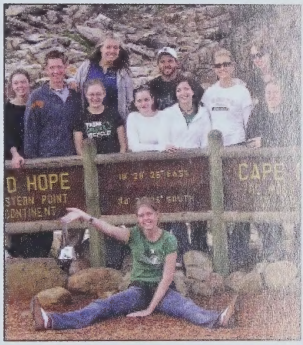
Creating New Ministries:
Matthew 28:18–19
Hymns: 484, 755, 772, 778 verses 1, 2, and 5

Sustaining Ministries:
Acts 4:32–37
Hymns: 757, 759, 760

Renewing Ministries:
Jeremiah 18:1–6
Hymns: 641, 674

Specialized Ministries:
Luke 4:14–21
Hymns: 486, 471, 769

International Ministries:
1 Corinthians 3:9, John 20:15–19, Micah 6:6–8, Matthew 25: 31–46 or 41–46
Hymns: See the sections *Justice and Mission* in the hymn book.



Led by the Spirit:

by the Rev. Joyce C. Hodgson and Mrs. Donna McIlveen

The Order of Diaconal Ministries is 100 years young! Led by the Spi
Let us be led by the Spirit as

Call to Worship: (adapted from Psalm 48:1, 9, 10a, 12–14)

Leader: Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised in the city of our God.

People: We ponder your steadfast love, O God, in the midst of your temple.

Leader: Your name, O God, like your praise, reaches to the ends of the earth.

People: Walk about Zion, go all around it, count its towers, consider well its ramparts; go through its citadels

Leader: Tell the next generation that this is God, our God forever and ever.

All: God will be our guide for ever.

Hymn: #575 "Lead me, Lord" (*Book of Praise*, 1997)

Opening Prayer:

Voice 1: God of our fathers and our mothers, our sisters and our brothers, we praise you for life, for the creation around us that you pronounced good, for all who have come before us who told us of your love.

Voice 2: Jesus Christ, Redeemer and Saviour, we thank you for your church, the heritage we have received, the women and men who have served you and shown us your way.

Voice 3: Holy Spirit, Comforter and Friend, your presence surrounds us, your energy fills us, your touch claims us for your service.

All: We ask forgiveness for times when your Spirit asked us to lead and we would not … when gifts were offered and we refused them … when the gospel languished and people perished because of our obstinacy and ignorance …. Set us free from our past sins and lead us into the future, which you have prepared for those who love you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Scripture Reading: Psalm 143:5–12 "I am your Servant"

100th Anniversary Worship Service of The Order of Diaconal Ministries

nbers of the order have heard the call to serve and been led to respond.
ect and celebrate together!

Statement of Diaconal Ministries (read in unison):

Diaconal Ministers are called to be servants of Jesus Christ.

Diaconal Ministers believe in a ministry that is spiritual, dynamic, creative, and a practical reenactment of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

They work collegially in leadership, open to the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, to equip and enrich others for Christian life and service.

They envision a ministry rooted in the life and worship of the whole people of God which emphasizes Christian Education, Pastoral Care, and Social Services.

Hymn: #587 "Called as partners in Christ's service" (*Book of Praise*, 1997)

Scripture Reading: Acts 16:11–15 and Romans 16:1–16

First Reflection: God Calls …

Throughout scripture, we see where God called individuals:

Abraham was standing out under the stars when God spoke to him and told him that his descendants would be more numerous than all the stars in the heavens.

Sarah laughed when God's messenger told her that in her old age, she would become a mother.

Moses heard God speak from a bush that refused to be consumed by fire.

Isaiah had a vision of God in the temple and responded, "Here I am, God. Send me."

Deborah, the judge, and **Huldah**, the prophetess, were touched by God and given special gifts.

When the time was right, God sent his only son to be our saviour.

Jesus was led by the Spirit to receive baptism in the Jordan from John the Baptist, his cousin.

Proclaiming the good news of God, Jesus invited others to "Come and see" or "Follow me".

Andrew, James, John, Mary Magdalene, Martha and Mary, and others answered his call.

As the structures and institutions of the early Christian church developed, the community sealed inner calls with an outer call to serve in a particular place in a particular way with particular gifts:

Lydia and Jason, leaders of house churches

Phoebe, the first deaconesses, and

Priscilla and Aquila, fellow workers.

The office of **deaconess** grew and developed. Members served in charitable work with the poor, the sick, and the aged.

By the end of the 4th century, convents and monasteries were established, and it wasn't long before the office of deaconess was replaced.

Hymn: #486 "The Church of Christ, in every age" (*Book of Praise*, 1997)

Second Reflection: The Church Responds …

In the late 19th century, as the overseas missionary movement grew, there arose a need in the church for trained Christian women who would serve with men, learning the language, and adapting to the culture so that women and families might be reached.

In **1836**, the first Protestant community of deaconesses was established by Pastor Theodore Fliedner at Kaiserswerth, Germany. Soon these orders of deaconesses spread across Europe and eventually to the majority of Christian Churches through the world.

In **1885**, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches recommended that the Presbyterian Church establish an Order of Deaconesses, and in 1887 the Church of Scotland instituted such an order.

In **1897**, in our own denomination, the Ewart Missionary Training School was opened. Led by the Spirit, the church saw that social service ministry could go forward if women were trained for overseas mission.

In **1907**, the Presbytery of Winnipeg respectfully overtured the General Assembly "to take steps to set apart an order of women who shall be known as deaconesses; who shall serve the Church as nurses, parish visitors, dispensers of charity, and in any other way that may prove to be desirable."

In **1908**, led by the Spirit, the church responded, and the **Order of Deaconesses** was established.

Hymn: #585 "Christ, you call us all to service" (*Book of Praise*, 1997)

Prayer of Thanksgiving:

Lord God, we thank you for all your servants, led by the Spirit. We thank you for men and women, chosen, elected, appointed, commissioned or ordained, led by your Spirit to serve you in a variety of ministries. We thank you for Abraham and Sarah, the ones you blessed to be a blessing to the nations. We thank you for Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, the ones who led your people to freedom in the promised land. We thank you for prophets like Huldah and kings like Josiah who honoured your word and preserved it for future generations. We thank you for Peter and Mary Magdalene, and those who first followed Jesus, our Saviour. We thank you for deacons of the early church like Stephen and Phoebe. We thank you for leaders of house churches like Lydia and Jason. We thank you for parents and grandparents like Eunice, Lois, and Rufus who raised godly children to follow in Christ's way. We thank you for missionaries like Priscilla and Aquila who reached out to new believers and formed new Christian communities. We thank you for early widows like Dorcas, who served the women and children of the church. We thank you for the deaconesses who nursed the sick and cared for the aged and the poor. We thank you that you continue to speak to women and men, calling servants in your name.

Lord God, lead and guide your church, reformed and always being reformed. May its ministries and service through the servants you prepare and anoint respond with care and love to neighbour and stranger alike, and may your church increase until at the name of Jesus every knee shall bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Scripture Reading: Luke 8:1–8

Third Reflection: Members Serve …

Since 1908, led by the Spirit, members of the order have heard the call to serve and been led to respond. Members have been led to serve in diaconal ministry in numerous circumstances and situations here in Canada and around the world. In India, Korea, or Africa … at camp, Vacation Bible school and Sunday schools … pulpit supply, visiting, and pastoral care …. When God calls, adventure follows …

(Readings from, *Stories of Diaconal Ministry*)

Dorothy Nekrassoff, designated in 1957:

"Several of us, *student deaconesses*, were going to the Mission Board/WMS gathering where we might learn our placement plan. As we walked, a man passed us. One of the girls said that he was the Director of our immigration work. As we walked, I kibitzed, "Help you with your bag, lady? your coat,

Mister?" No sooner had I walked into the gathering when our WMS representative asked if I would accept a placement at the Port of Montreal, meeting immigrants and others, helping them as able, then sending on their names to the local churches where they'd be welcomed. I truly felt God's call after all my kibitzing. I enjoyed the work and was able to help many people."

Margaret Boyd, designated in 1948:

"The use of a missionary van made it possible for visitors to reach people living in remote areas of the north. One summer, a co-worker sought to visit families in towns of northern Saskatchewan where the church to them was a building or a voice on the radio. A man said to me one day, "You may think you are not doing any good here, but the name of The Presbyterian Church in Canada printed on the side on your van tells people that the church does care.""

Muriel (Judd) Brown, designated in 1945:

"Little did those co-workers in the insurance office know that, when I entered that deaconess school, a life of adventure lay ahead of me, a life far more interesting and challenging than office work! Nor did I have any idea of what lay ahead—the joys and sorrows, the agonies and the ecstasies. I came to learn that the words of a particular hymn were, and are still, true for me *all the way my Saviour leads me, what have I to ask beside?*"

Hymn: #699 "All the way my Saviour leads me" (*Book of Praise*, 1997)

Fourth Reflection: Diaconal Ministry Continues …

Diaconal is taken from Diakonia, a Greek word meaning 'servant ministry'. Since the early days of the Church, people have been called by God to serve. Led by the Spirit, the Church responded by formally establishing an order 100 years ago, wherein the call to servant ministry could be expressed. Led by the Spirit, and for 100 years now, members of the order have met the challenges of servant ministry under the direction of the Church. Led by the Spirit, the order of Diaconal Ministries continues to fulfill its call to servant ministry, while seeking to discern its place within a changing Church. Led by the Spirit, the order celebrates the past, and with hope looks to the future. 100 years young, the order trusts that in the future as in the past, the Spirit will lead.

Offering

Prayer of Dedication:

O Lord, led by the Spirit, we offer to you our prayers, our tithes, this offering of treasure and the time and talents you have given us. Use them to break open new opportunities for service as your church in the world. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Hymn: #575 "Lead me, Lord" (*Book of Praise*, 1997)

Blessing:

God has called women and men in the past and continues to call to this very day. Let each of us listen for God's call on our lives and let us respond with open hearts. Let us go forth in Christian service, following Jesus, and led by the Spirit. Go with the blessing of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Leadership Notes:

- Invite local members of the Order of Diaconal Ministries to your meeting.
- Local stories of diaconal ministry could be substituted in the second reflection section.
- An additional source of stories is the January/February 2009 issue of the on-line publication *Womens Perspectives*.
- Celebrate with a 100th anniversary cake!

Order of Diaconal Ministry Quiz!

At the 34th General Assembly in 1908, the Order of Deaconess was established. How much do you know about the order? Take a moment and test your knowledge!

1. In what year was the Deaconess uniform "hung up" and no longer worn?
   a) 1925 c) 1952
   b) 1940 d) 1985

2. Who was the first graduate of the Training Home to be designated a Deaconess?
   a) Athalie Read c) Lissa Glendinning
   b) Evelyn Walker d) Adelaide Sutherland

3. Match the designation dates below with the names listed above in question 2.
   a) 1909 c) 1943
   b) 1910 d) 1946

4. Put the various names of the training school for Deaconesses/Diaconal Ministers in order of use.
   a) Presbyterian Missionary and Deaconess Training Home
   b) Ewart Missionary Training Home
   c) Ewart Missionary and Deaconesses Training Home
   d) Ewart College
   e) Presbyterian Missionary and Deaconess Training School

5. Which Psalm is known as the 'Deaconess Psalm'?

a) Psalm 42 c) Psalm 100

b) Psalm 91 d) Psalm 150

6. In what year was the name changed from the Order of Deaconess to the Order of Diaconal Ministries?

a) 1970 c) 1984

b) 1975 d) 1991

7. In what year did Ewart College and Knox College amalgamate?

a) 1990 c) 1992

b) 1991 d) 1993

8. In what year were members of the Order of Diaconal Ministries made members of the courts of the church, with voice and vote?

a) 1980 c) 1995

b) 1991 d) 2000

9. The word 'Diaconal' is taken from Diakonia, a Greek word meaning which one of the following?

a) servant ministry c) assistant

b) youth worker d) family ministry

10. Members of the order have served the church in numerous ways, including which of the following?

a) Congregational Deaconess d) Port Worker

b) Deaconess-at-Large e) All of the above

c) Van Worker f) None of the above

11. The order is connected worldwide through which two organizations?

a) Diakonia of the Americas and the Caribbean

b) United Diaconal Orders

c) Deaconesses of the World

d) DIAKONIA World Federation

e) a and d

f) a and b

(Answers for the quiz can be found on page 37)

In Memoriam

Kathleen Martha Cowper

Kathleen Martha COWPER (née Elliot) passed away suddenly at church on Sunday, January 18, 2009. Kathleen (Kay), 83 years old, was the beloved wife of 60 years to Rev. Larry Cowper of Fergus, ON. She was a loving mother of Judy and husband Charles Pitre of Yellowknife; Lynn and husband Larry Joubert of Fergus; David Cowper and wife Helena of Toronto; and grandmother to Stephane and wife Mae; Nathan, Rene, Rebecca, and Caitlin Pitre; Jonathan and wife Stacey; Andrew and wife Debbie; Katrina Joubert; Steven and wife Stephanie; and Laura Cowper. She was also an extra special great-grandmother to Samuel and Phillip Pitre; Anakyn and Hayden Cowper; and Cameron, Cayley, and Mackenzie Joubert. Also foster grandmother to Isobel, Grant, Tyrah, and the late Mary Adele.

Kay will be sadly missed by her family and friends at Bible study, the WMS, and by the many people whose lives have been touched by her during her lifelong commitment and involvement in the congregations and committees over the years. The Rev. Dr. Alan McPherson speaks of Kay as being warm, thoughtful, and kind. He speaks of her as a loyal and dependable help to her husband, Larry—a dedicated "minister's wife" in the best sense of that term, but also someone who stepped on to the national stage—willing to be where God called her to be. Kay was also remembered as a good neighbour … a generous, welcoming host ... a consummate cook ... a great baker ... a true friend.

Kay was the President of the National WMS from 1992–1995.

Agnes Hislop

A memorial service will be held for Agnes Hislop at Knox Presbyterian in Red Deer, AB, on May 2 at 1 p.m.

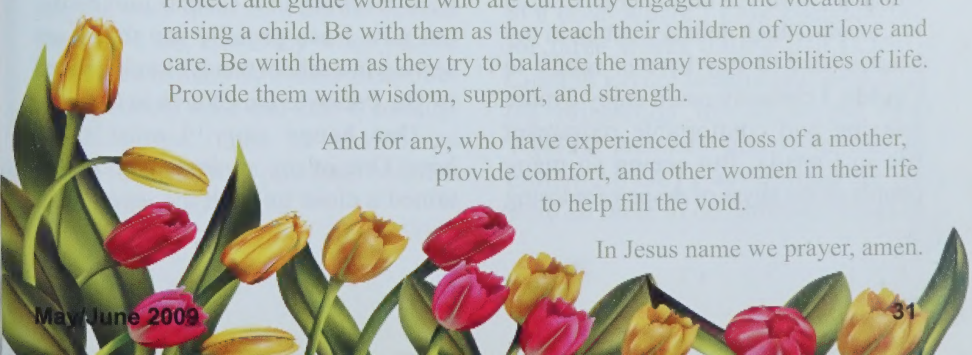
Mother's Day Prayer:

God of love, we thank you for the women that raised us. We thank you for their love, their care, and their time. We thank you for the nurture they provided to us as children, and the inspiration they provide as we age.

Protect and guide women who are currently engaged in the vocation of raising a child. Be with them as they teach their children of your love and care. Be with them as they try to balance the many responsibilities of life. Provide them with wisdom, support, and strength.

And for any, who have experienced the loss of a mother, provide comfort, and other women in their life to help fill the void.

In Jesus name we prayer, amen.



Michael Tai
Associate Missionary to Taiwan

The year 2008 was an important, yet sad, year for Taiwan. The Taiwanese political party that was elected to power eight years ago was defeated at the presidential election in March 2008. The Chinese Nationalist party that had controlled Taiwan since the end of World War II, returned to power and its leader, Ma Yin-joe, born in China, was elected president of Taiwan. The popular name of "Taiwan" was swiftly abandoned and a decree was passed that the name of "Taiwan" should not be used, but rather, The Republic of China. Upon inauguration, President Ma immediately adopted a new policy that the world regards as pro-Chinese. Many who seek an independent Taiwan were dismayed at this turn of events.

2008 also marked the year that I reached the age of retirement. After some serious consideration, I decided to stay on to continue my ministry, even though I have formally applied for retirement with The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Much debate went on in my heart, either to stay here or return to Canada. I certainly could enjoy a more relaxing and comfortable retirement life in Canada. But seeing so many people in the abyss of despair for losing what Taiwanese have fought for in the last few hundred years to be self-determined people, I felt that I should stay on. The university that I have worked for since my coming to this land also asked me to continue my service. So, the decision was made. With encouragement from the Rev. Dr. Ron Wallace, I asked to remain in Taiwan as an associate missionary, even though I was officially retired.

Indeed, God works in mysterious ways. Once I decided to stay on, a new medical college that will be established in memory of the Rev. Dr. George Leslie Mackay was granted its charter by Taiwan's Ministry of Education. I was approached to help design the curriculum, especially in the areas of medical humanities and general education (basic science and liberal arts). Mackay Medical College will receive its first students in August 2009. The initiative to establish this college came from Mackay Memorial Hospital that was established by Canadian missionary, George Leslie Mackay over a hundred years ago. I am privileged to be able to join this new service for the Lord. I had been teaching in a secular university, but now I can proudly say that I am serving in a school that is closely related to The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

One happy story, I must share here. One of my students who maintained a close tie with me, even after

Overseas Staff Birthdays

August

9 - Paul McLean, Taiwan

15 - Urey Karen Onuoha, Nigeria

his graduation, came to see me one day last spring to tell me that he had decided to be baptized. This I had been praying for awhile as this intelligent and also diligent student was hungry for the gospel and had attended the Christian Students' Fellowship with my encouragement. I mention him here because his parents opposed his search for the gospel and his association with a church. The amazing thing was that his parents eventually consented to his conversion and when he got married just a few months ago, they came to church for the first time to witness the blessed event. The seed that was sowed a few years ago had slowly taken root and now it has become a beautiful tree.

I will continue serving our Lord in the coming year in Taiwan and I pray that God will give me strength to carry on. The work is not easy, but the mission must be done, especially when people feel overwhelmed by events and sometimes wonder if the end time is coming. God's gospel must be shared, as God's love can be a powerful comfort to disheartened people.

May I also take this opportunity to thank the many AMS and WMS groups, Sunday schools, and churches that sent me greeting cards and prayed for me during the past year. Your support is my strength to carry on. May God bless us all.

Shona Blatch
Tanzania, Africa
February 2009

Dear Friends and Family,

At the end of January, I traded cold and snowy Canada for the hot and humid country of Tanzania. My flight out of Toronto was delayed due to a snow storm, so I arrived in Amsterdam with only enough time to step off the plane and board another one to Tanzania. I made sure I had a window seat and I looked out the window as we flew over the Swiss Alps and the Sahara desert. Both seemed to go on and on forever. The plane landed in Kilimanjaro briefly and then finally I arrived in Dar es Salaam late at night the next day. I had been travelling for a total of 36 hours by the time I arrived without much sleep, if any.

Susi, my new language survey supervisor, met me at the airport and took me to a hotel where I have been staying for three weeks during CLI (Cross-Cultural Living Internship). Basically, it's orientation for all of the new Wycliffe members and volunteers in Eastern Africa. I was surprised that we were all there to do different things in

different places in Africa. I will be doing survey work.

For now, we are all adjusting to the climate, food, and time zone. During our training, we have learned about the history of Tanzania, the importance of translating the Bible into mother tongue languages, Christianity in East Africa, the other prominent Tanzanian religions (Islam and Animism), African family issues, and poverty issues. Many of the speakers have been either native Tanzanians or missionaries who have lived in the country for a number of years. We have also been given advice on health and safety, dealing with authorities, cooking, driving in Tanzania, appropriateness of dress, etc. Everything that I have learned so far is helping me to settle into this new culture with as much ease as possible. Having a solid understanding of the Tanzanian culture will hopefully allow me to build positive relationships with the Tanzanian people that I will meet.

I have also had the opportunity to visit a Tanzanian hospital in Dar es Salaam. We went as part of our training to see the facilities that they have to offer, but we also brought some treats to hand out to some of the patients. We visited the children's orthopedic ward where children were recovering from their surgeries. Then, we visited the prosthetics area of the hospital which I thought was fascinating. They made the prosthetic limbs right there in the hospital using, as much as possible, materials that could be found locally. We met a young girl who was practising walking on a new leg after hers was amputated because of a snake bite. She was motoring along as fast as we were walking. Then, we visited the women's ward. These were women recovering from reconstructive surgery for injuries acquired during childbirth. One woman we spoke to had been living with a fistula, causing urine to pass through her reproductive tract for 40 years. When this happens, no one wants to be around these women because they smell so bad. So the lady explained that she not only lost her baby at birth, but her husband left her because of her fistula. Now, at about 60 years old, she was finally healing. We prayed with her and then started to leave, but all the women wanted us to pray with them. So with a translator, one member of our group prayed aloud for the 18 women in the room.

This past Sunday, we had the opportunity to participate in a Swahili church service. We didn't understand most of what was said, but we did recognize some of the songs so we could sing along in Swahili. After the service, we were taken to church members' homes for lunch. We ate pilau rice and cooked bananas. I will have to get the recipe because I really liked it. It's a mixture of plantain bananas, coconut, onion, and tomatoes. Our host family's six-year-old son was so cute and spoke both Swahili and English fluently. We practised some of our Swahili with the family, but in general we just had to stick to English for conversation.

An interesting fact that I've learned is that my name in Swahili means 'sewing', as in 'sewing clothes'. So I often get a smirk or a bemused look when I introduce myself to a Tanzanian. After visiting some fabric stores, I've been thinking I should learn to sew because they have some beautiful fabrics here.

In the meantime, there is no time for sewing. We've been kept very busy with training sessions. Soon I will be taking an eight-hour bus ride to Iringa where I will take an intensive course in Swahili. Knowing the language will be necessary for communicating with Tanzanians and generally living here. I'm hoping that when I return to Dar es Salaam I will be able to hold at least a simple conversation in Swahili because I'm told that we have a lot of work to do in language assessment. In fact, it is possible that I will be doing two surveys instead of one while I'm here. Please continue to pray for me. Thank you so much for all of your support! It makes such a difference to know that people are praying for me back home.

(The national WMS has assisted Shona with funding for her mission placement.)

Jeanie Lee
Bethlehem

Greetings from Bethlehem!

As an EAPPI (Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel) participant here in Bethlehem, I'm having a life changing experience. I have been able to learn so much about words such as politics, justice, injustice, power of religions, and human rights through this vivid experience.

I have just had my first three days of time off. During this time I used Jerusalem as my base and visited the Temple Mountain, Mount of Olive, and many other holy sites. Yesterday, I visited Engedi (the Dead Sea) and the sight seeing of the Engedi desert with mountains along one side and the Dead Sea on the other was very peaceful and magnificent.

Today, I visited the only medical clinic in Tuqu'a village. Tuqu'a village is one of the many villages suffering from the confiscation of the land from the Israelis. The soldiers and army trucks are conspicuous all over the village such that the people's lives are threatened by them everyday. Israelis already took much of the land from the Palestinian owners and have built settler communities named Tuqu'a A, B, and so on. We had a meeting with the chairman of the village who was responsible for the medical centre in the village. He gave us a tour of the centre which looked so old and has outdated equipment. We have also been visiting and meeting with the mayor, counsellors, the village chairman, other leaders, and ordinary people.

One of the most exciting moments of my trip so far, was to accompany the non-violent demonstration in Um Salamone, held every Friday. Since the big demonstration two weeks ago, with

Aida Refugee Camp

many international participants as well as Palestinians, the Israeli army personnel and the police invaded two leaders' houses in the middle of the night and blindfolded them and tied their hands for two hours. They smashed all the furniture and other household items and threatened them in front of six young children. We visited those two leaders' houses and heard the stories about their horrible experience at the hands of the Israeli army and police. Right after the visit, we decided to go back to the demonstration again as a larger group made up of three leaders and three ecumenical accompaniers. When we arrived, 15 fully equipped soldiers and police were waiting and ready for the demonstration. It was a tense moment, coming face to face with 15 against the six of us. One of the sergeants called me over and asked for my name and phone number, but I said I could not remember

At the demonstration (3 EA's and 3 Palestinian leaders) confronting 15 fully armed soldiers and police

it—it was like something from a movie. It was a very dangerous and tense situation!

I've been attending many different churches here in Bethlehem. Attendance at local churches establishes and builds the connection with our EAPPI program. As clergy, I think this is a blessed opportunity as I worship in the many different Christian ways (Orthodox, Lutheran, Catholic, Ethiopian, and Korean Churches).

I also had an opportunity to visit another placement for EAs (Yanun) two weeks ago. Although Yanun is one of the smallest villages, it is a beautiful place with mountains, valleys, and almond trees in bloom. Sadly, our team of four was placed there to protect people from the vicious settlers who are strong Zionists. They do not hesitate to beat up the villagers or kill them. Unfortunately, I had to leave early and return to Bethlehem because I became very sick and experienced a fever and pain (it is the only illness that I have experienced in the trip so far).

By the way, our staff team (Dan, Pauline, Anja, and Matilda) here are all such wonderful people. They are very reliable and demonstrate good leadership and provide a clear direction for us to follow.

Rev. Jeanie Lee is a Presbyterian minister participating on the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) from January to April 2009.

Address Change

New Address:
Dr. Bill and Mrs. Sheila McKelvie
10 Wicklow Street
St. John's, NL A1B 3H2

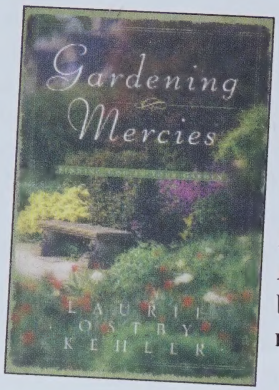
Order of Diaconal Ministry Quiz Answers

Quiz on page 29

1. b)1940
2. c) Lissa Glendinning
3. a) 1909 – Lissa Glendinning
   b) 1910 – Adelaide Sutherland
   c) 1943 – Athalie Read
   d) 1946 – Evelyn Walker
4. b) Ewart Missionary Training Home
   c) Ewart Missionary and Deaconesses Training Home
   a) Presbyterian Missionary and Deaconess Training Home
   e) Presbyterian Missionary and Deaconess Training School
   d) Ewart College
5. b) Psalm 91
6. c) 1984
7. b) 1991
8. b) 1991
9. a) servant ministry
10. e) All of the above
11. e) a and d

Book Reviews

Gardening Mercies
by Laurie Ostby Kehler
reviewed by Heather Mutch



Gardening Mercies is a book that combines the basic through to the detailed components of planting and maintaining a garden. The book also has a devotional focus, reminding us that in a garden one naturally feels summoned to consider God, the universe He created, and our part in it.

Each chapter of this book focuses on a different aspect of gardening. In a garden we see the full fabric of life—the cycle of new-life, growth, waning, death, and decay, and finally after a season—rebirth.

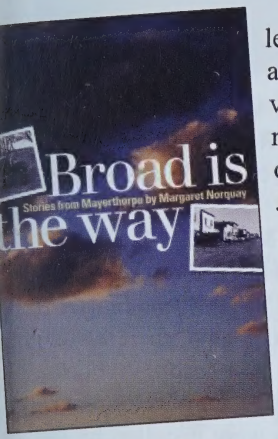
A garden is never free from challenges, the vagaries of nature, or the inexperience of the gardener. So too, we face many demands in our daily lives. Just as our garden is never a finished work of art, we must remember that our lives are also a work in progress. Yet, we must remember to enjoy the beauty and goodness we have, instead of focusing on what is lacking.

I enjoyed this book—learning about new plants, gardening zones, and gardening tips. What I found most rewarding in this book were the many truths learned and applications for my walk of faith. This book has a unique devotional approach ... no green thumb required!

Broad is the Way: Stories from Mayerthorpe
by Margaret Norquay
reviewed by Janice Barnes

This incredible woman began her long and varied career in social work; her close family members worked hard during the Great Depression era to ensure a decent university education for Margaret and two of her siblings. An organizer from the beginning, who knew also how to raise a dollar then stretch it, Margaret occupied many community development positions before meeting and marrying Jim Norquay in 1949, a young United Church minister already serving in Mayerthorpe, Alberta.

Such a collection of stories, with its thought provoking title, enhances Margaret's determined character and incredible humour (for a clergy wife) as we read in Matthew 7:13 (King James Version), "broad is the way that leadeth to destruction." She freely admits to being on such a path in her subsequent relationships with the Mayerthorpe Ladies' Aid, the Co-op Committee, and the local RCMP detachment.



Margaret at times leads us playfully along in her adventures, yet she never loses sight of her loyalty to Jim and their congregation of several years to whom, through her guidance, she is able to affect positive change.

Still later, Margaret's career jumped to writing documentaries for CBC's, *Take Thiry*. She also became the Director of Studies for Ryerson University's much applauded Open College program.

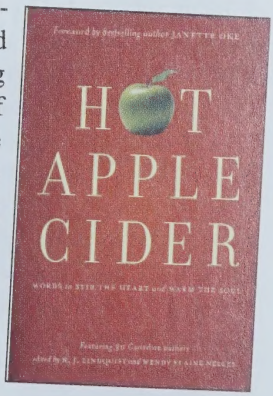
Hot Apple Cider—Words to Stir the Heart and Warm the Soul
edited by N.J. Lindquist and Wendy Elaine Nelles
reviewed by Janice Barnes

As the title strongly suggests the co-editors of this publication, who founded *The Word Guild*, invited 30 such Canadian Christian authors known and as yet unknown, to wrest from themselves, and write some 40 odd short heart warming stories from their diverse life experiences; Lindquist and Nelles themselves know that the way to the best apple cider is to "bruise and crush the fruit."

Uniquely Canadian authorship, from this Guild, includes such names as Maxine Hancock, Rudy Wiebe, and hockey player, Paul Henderson. Each one writes of personal struggles which do not always end in victories, yet a vibrant thread of accepting faith binds them all together as they envision God working in and through their lives in the most surprising ways.

Cider, hot and fragrant, can be sipped slowly, yet there are those among us who prefer to drink deeply, seated before a blazing fire, to absorb in one evening the laughter and tears of this deeply inspirational publication with its gems of comfort and wisdom.

Let us see for ourselves whether these heart-moving stories challenge our own deeply-rooted faith and lead us along similar paths of struggle or, like God, sustain us amid suffering intended to award us at the last our apples of gold.



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Presbyterial

London Presbyterial held their 95th Annual Meeting on January 23 at New St. James Presbyterian Church in London. The theme for the day was, "Open my Eyes." President Winn Files welcomed all present and led the meeting. Rev. Anne Yee Hibbs introduced the morning Bible study on prayer and through three passages of scripture and questions, had all present broaden their understanding on the centrality that prayer has in our faithfulness. She also helped us to refocus on the disciples' prayer as *faith in action*. The Rev. Theresa McDonald Lee gave a thorough report on the upcoming events at Camp Kintail for June 2009.

After lunch, we had a singsong and worship service, led by the ladies of St. Andrew's, North Caradoc. Our guest speaker, Sara Webster, member at Fingal Presbyterian Church, gave a PowerPoint presentation and spoke of her WMS Mission Trip to Eastern Europe in October 2008. She, and 11 other participants, had a memorable time visiting churches, school, and projects supported by the PCC, PWSD, WMS, and individual congregations.

-Elaine Brown

Members of **Huron-Perth Women's Missionary Society** met in Knox Monkton Presbyterian Church on February 8 for their annual meeting. Elizabeth Stewart, President of the Monkton WMS, welcomed everyone, and Bernice Richards, Stratford, opened with prayer. The WMS purpose was recited.

Ruth Laing, Mitchell, Mary Scott, Stratford, Ruth Hart, North Easthope, Lillian Sparling, Cromarty, and Elizabeth Stewart, Monkton, gave their annual reports. Shirley Aitcheson, Avonton, read the Nominating Committee report, and new officers were installed by the Rev. Anne Yee-Hibbs, Area Education Consultant. The Rev. Anne Yee Hibbs also gave a presentation on the responsibilities of the various officers of the local groups. She also presented a plaque, along with Ina McMillan, to the Goderich Afternoon WMS to honour their many years of WMS work. (They have amalgamated with the evening group: see article on page 43.)

The Rev. Theresa McDonald Lee gave a brief history of Camp Kintail. They are celebrating their 80th Anniversary in 2009 and a celebration is planned for June 23. There are also plans to build a gazebo in memory of a girl who attended every year in her wheelchair.

Following a delicious lunch, Shirley Aitcheson led a hymn sing with Eunice Bisset at the piano. Bernice Richards, assisted by Mary Duffin and Mary Scott of Stratford, led the devotions on the theme, "Journey of Change."

Our secretary, Nancy Schneider of Listowel, read the minutes of the last

annual meeting. Margaret French and Ruth Laing of Mitchell led the In Memorial and Betty Eliliott, Listowel, received and dedicated the offering. Jan McInnes, Atwood, took everyone on an interesting "Journey of Change" as our theme speaker. Following this, Ruth Dewar, Atwood, gave the registration report, and Ethel Corry closed the meeting with prayer.

-Ruth Laing

Knox Presbyterian Church, Welland, was the venue for the 58th Annual Meeting of the **Niagara Presbyterial**.

Janet Francis, President of the Women's Group at Knox, Welland, welcomed members and guests. The minister, the Rev. Bernie McGale, conducted a communion service. The theme, "Work of Many Hands," was echoed in Rev. McGale's sermon and in the manner in which the officers presented their reports.

Our guest speaker, Linda Shaw, gave us a very well planned and concise picture of Guyana, "Land of Many Waters, Peoples, and Stories." The Presbyterian Church in Canada has had an association with the Guyana Presbyterian Church for 135 years. After describing the wide scope of her work as a Christian Educator, Linda introduced us to a number of the interesting people she and her husband had met during their three years in that Caribbean country. Linda also told us how much letters and e-mails from prayer partners in Canada had meant to them during their time overseas. She encouraged us to continue this good practice.

During lunch, Rev. Bernie McGale, Moderator of Niagara Presbytery, brought greetings from presbytery. President Jessie Knox brought greetings from synodical and Nancy Millar brought greetings from Council. Rev. Theresa

Pictured is the Huron-Perth WMS Presbyterian Executive: (back row) Elizabeth Stewart, Helen Dunseith, Jan MacInnes, Lillian Sparling, Mary Scott, Ruth Hart, Ruth Laing (front row) Ina McMillan, Bernice Richards, Mary Duffin, Ethel Corry (missing), Lois Horne, Margaret French, Winnie Walters

McDonald-Lee, Director of Camp Kintail, who had travelled all the way from Exeter with her small daughter, Anna, issued an invitation to come and "Have Cake by the Lake" on June 23 to celebrate Camp Kintail's 80th Anniversary.

Donna Bachur, with Margaret Rice at the piano, conducted morning and afternoon hymn sings. After lunch, the Rev. Anne Yee-Hibbs led a helpful workshop on praying in public. Jessie Knox, President of the Synodical of South-western Ontario, installed the new presbyterial executive. Christine Cummings, President of Niagara Presbyterial, noted that we were particularly pleased that Isobel McKeowan, who will be 100 years old in June, and is our longest serving Honourary President, was able to be with us.

-Hazel McGraw.

The **Lanark-Renfrew Presbyterial** Annual Meeting took place at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Arnprior on January 31. The theme was, 'Walking in the Light', based on John 8:12. President Vivian Young welcomed everyone and led the WMS purpose and the constitutional prayer. The Rev. Milton Fraser extended a warm welcome to everyone. The WMS ladies of Arnprior led the devotions based on 'Jesus is the Light of the World'.

Joan Hilliard reminded us of Council's two projects: Buying bricks for the school in Jobat, India, and sending money to buy books for students in Eastern Europe. The Quebec and Eastern Ontario Synodical Annual Meeting will be held in Smiths Falls on April 17–18 with Rick Fee and Druse Bryan as the guest speakers.

Carleton Place performed the In Memoriam service and candles were lit to signify the lives of the nine members who passed away in 2008. Almonte WMS carried out the Seasons of Prayer and prayed for local and distant needs.

Betty Zwiers, and the other Renfrew members, led an excellent Bible study. It was based on 'Ripples of Renewal' and she spoke of the challenges faced by the Israelites while being led by Moses. The ladies were divided into groups and discussed thoughtful questions facing us individually and as a WMS group. The study concluded with a reading of the book, *Scaredy Squirrel*, demonstrating that change can be surprisingly positive.

The Arnprior ladies served a delicious hot lunch. The afternoon began with prayer followed by special singing. Linda Shaw, who along with her husband, the Rev. Ian Shaw, was a missionary to Guyana, was the afternoon speaker. Linda worked with the youth, Sunday schools, and Vacation Bible Schools and taught reading classes to youth and adults. The Guyanese love Canadian Presbyterians and Linda is very grateful for support received from The Presbyterian Church in Canada. She was thanked and presented with a gift by Melissa Valliquette. The Rev Milton Fraser inducted the new officers and the

meeting closed with prayer followed by the Lord's Prayer, led by the new president, Lottie Sutherland.

-Vivian Young

Brockville Presbyterial met at Knox, Morrisburg, for their annual meeting and dinner on January 29.

Linda Shaw, home from a three-year term in Guyana, spoke. Also attending were Lois Klempa, President of the Synodical of Quebec and Eastern Ontario, her husband, Rev. Dr. William Klempa, and Christine Ball, Regional Staff for Eastern Ontario.

President Margaret Reynolds welcomed the visitors and members representing nine groups.

Lois Beaton prepared the devotions, Strength for the Journey, led by the Winchester and Morewood groups. Catherine Blatch led the Bible study, Fit Our Feet for a Christian Walk.

Linda Shaw showed beautiful pictures of the rivers, waterfalls, rain forests, and savannas in Guyana. She and her husband, the Rev. Ian Shaw, have now returned to life in Canada. The people they leave are multicultural and live mainly along the coast of Guyana. Africans, Indians, and Chinese were brought to Guyana to work the rice paddies, sugar plantations, and rich mines. Linda and Ian led worship, Bible studies, and youth ministries while in Guyana. Linda also wrote Sunday school and Vacation Bible School curriculum and taught phonics to all ages to improve literacy.

-Donna Wilson

Local

The members of the **Women's Missionary Society at Knox, Goderich**, held their first meeting on August 22, 1884. By 1912, the membership was 96. Their first recorded Life Membership was presented in 1916 to Mrs. William MacArthur, mother of Lily MacArthur who was among the first graduates from the Deaconess Training School. They continued through the years as a very vital group in Knox Church. In the 1960s, Knox WMS sponsored a young medical student, Deborah Tezlo, and many have heard her speak since as she visits this area. In recent years, membership has declined and age has taken its toll so the decision was made to amalgamate with the Arthur Circle

Diane Osborn, Tiemie Devries, and Marjorie Claus are cutting the cake after the service where they were honoured at Knox, Goderich.

—a WMS affiliate meeting in the evening. Therefore, on December 31, 2008, the Women's Missionary Society —afternoon auxiliary closed its books for the last time.

Before it closed, the WMS presented three Life Memberships and the Arthur Circle presented one Honourary Life Membership.

-Eunice Bisset

St. John's Presbyterian Church, Cresswell, WMS celebrated 100 years of faith and mission on October 29 with an afternoon service and Victorian tea. Neighbouring presbyterials and past executive attended. The guest speaker was the Rev. Sarah Kim. Pictured are The Rev. Sarah Kim and Joan Anderson cutting the celebration cake and a group of ladies dressed for tea.

Sandra and Glenn Rowell, and their daughter Melissa and Christine spoke to the congregation of St. Andrew's, Welland, on their VBS Puppet Ministry in Africa. They are pictured here with Byron and Marlyn Leslie, and Pastor Guy Sinclair.

The WMS of St. Andrew's, Barrie, presented a Certificate of Recognition to Mrs. Marion Wallace, in honour of her many years of service as a telephone convenor, having served the past five years confined in hospital and nursing homes. Pictured are Mrs. Wallace, Co-presidents: Evangeline Williams and Ellen Heikkila, and Secretary, Gladys McKillican.

Forward in Faith

This is my final article for Forward in Faith. I will be stepping down in May as your treasurer, having completed my term on the WMS Council. In February 2006, I wrote my first article as your WMS Treasurer and I said that it was my plan to share, when available, background and up-to-date information on the grants approved by the WMS Council. I wanted to let you know how your money was spent.

I hope I have done this. I hope I have been able to fill in the blanks as I have shared information on gifts, special grants, projects, and leadership development funding.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your support of the work of the Women's Missionary Society during my time as your treasurer. Unfortunately, we are showing decreased Presbyterial givings, but we continue to be faithful to our mandate and our purpose. The following is the unaudited report of givings for 2008:

Presbyterial givings to December 31, 2007 – $620,009
Presbyterian givings to December 31, 2008 – $588,523
Decrease in givings – $ 31,486

(Note: Eight presbyterials show an increase and 28 presbyterials show a decrease in their givings for 2008.)

An update on the "Together We Can" projects at the end of 2008:
Eastern Europe School Supplies – $17,881.36
Jobat Hostel, India – $41,502.08 – the goal is $150,000

I want to take this opportunity to introduce you to the new treasurer, Janet Brewer. Janet is a very active WMS member from West Toronto Presbyterial. I know you will be hearing from her regularly!

Thank you for caring and sharing.
Wilma Welsh, Treasurer

Answer for Pentecost crossword from page 13
Baptism of the Spirit

Circulation News

Katherine Allen

I know that statistics can be boring, but now that the list of subscribers has been returned to the office, we have some to share. As of March 2009 there are approximately 3,383 subscribers compared with 3,618 from a year ago for a difference of 235. (This does not include the number of subscriptions for large print and audio-cassette tapes in which the numbers fluctuate.) We need to look seriously at these numbers and think of how we can increase our subscriptions.

Does everyone in your group subscribe to the magazine?

Are you passing your magazine along to others in your congregation to expose them to *Glad Tidings*?

Do you have any creative ideas that you can pass along to us for promoting the magazine?

Finally, we are also starting to think about our renewal for 2010! Please notify us by the end of June if a new *Glad Tidings* secretary/contact person has been elected for your congregation. This will ensure that the summer mailing, which contains the list of subscribers, is sent to the proper source. Please include the name of the congregation and group number when corresponding.

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Sharing your *Glad Tidings* is a great way to promote the WMS, and to promote *Glad Tidings*. When you are finished with your copy, encourage …

A senior to read, Stop, Look, Listen (p.4), or Retirement (p.10)
A student to read, From the Editor's Desk (p.3)
A gardener to read, Wren Song (p.18)

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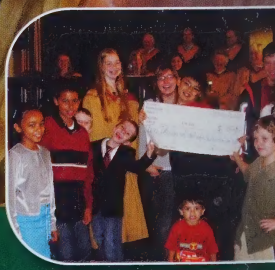

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Glad Tidings
July/August 2009
Council Report
Also: Clowning Ministry

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A cheerful heart
is good medicine,
but a downcast spirit
dries up the bones.

Proverbs 17:22

Glad Tidings

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Glad Tidings reports on aspects of the Women's Missionary Society on all levels.

Glad Tidings challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally, and internationally.

Glad Tidings through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired, and motivated to action.

GladTidings provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters, and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS or by the Editor.

Colleen Wood

From the Editor's Desk

I grew up in a home with a lot of laughter. My dad, a retired Presbyterian minister, used Christian magic, optical illusions, and ventriloquism in his ministry. His sermons always included jokes. To this day, he still loves comedies and making people laugh. In the seniors' home where he resides, he will still bring out his stuffed monkey and perform a short routine for his friends and fellow residents.

I know that many of you enjoy reaching out to others with smiles and laughter. Some of you provide a friendly smile as you deliver Meals on Wheels to those in need. Others bring a friendly pet to visit in a seniors' home or hospital, providing therapy and joy to the residents. Others reach out to friends with a funny reading or joke. And others provide that friendly smile, or fun bit of laughter at a WMS meeting—even our Council meeting has many joy-filled moments!

For the summer edition of *Glad Tidings*, I wanted to give you all a smile. Smile as you learn about reaching out to others with the good news of the gospel through Clowning Ministry. Enjoy a laugh at yourself as you consider whether it is time for you to join Presbyterians Anonymous. Then consider the connection between humour and theology in Jim Czegledi's article, "A Sense of Humour."

I also encourage you to read, Opportunities Abound, a report on our annual WMS Council Meeting. Council, the WMS equivalent of General Assembly, is the decision-making body of the WMS. Yet, it is also so much more. It is a place where we gather to pray, learn, worship, and work. It is also a place where we experience mission first-hand, through presentations, hospitality, and the care of friends and colleagues.

Enjoy your summer!

Clowning:

A Humble Ministry —with Smiles

by Donna McIlveen

Warning ... this article contains smiles and smiles are contagious. So ... if you are at all concerned for your well being ... keep reading! And smile smile smile!

Smiles are a special gift from God that's given to us to use and share. It is a sad day when a smile gets mislaid and an even sadder day when no one notices. So, what course of action should be followed to ensure that the mislaid smile is found? Should there be a careful and thorough search undertaken until the lost smile is found? And when the lost is found, what reaction is appropriate? Does one call friends and neighbours together and begin a celebration? "Rejoice, the lost is found!" Well, when it comes to smiles, one should always be willing to go that extra mile until the lost is found. Remember that old saying: the shortest distance between two people is a smile.

Imagine bringing a smile to someone who has mislaid their smile—a sick, frightened child lying in a hospital bed; a group of senior adults living together in long-term care, but still alone; a caregiver, who knows all too well the meaning of tired; a congregation who sings of joy, but routinely mislays their smiles on Sunday morning. To each of these situations, there is a response that can bring healing and hope—that of the humble ministry of clowning. The clown gives people hope—despite whatever obstacles may come along—by sharing God's love that never gives up. Clown ministry can help bring back the mislaid smiles so long forgotten. And not just any smile, but a smile born of God's love.

Clown ministry is all about humbly sharing the love of God. The desire to bring God's love to each person is at the heart of each Christian clown. They are not entertainers or performers nor preachers in a costume, but a living reflection of Jesus Christ, God's gift of love to us. We see Christ alive in the Christian clown. The white face of a clown symbolizes the dying to self, while the colour symbolizes new life. For the Christian clown, this is a reaffirmation of Easter. Jesus came to us to show us God's love and to affirm that we are loved and lovable. Love comes alive as the clown interacts with people and humbly shares that message of love. Clowns embrace the love that God gave, and then straight from the heart, they give it away again.

Gifts are meant to be shared and especially the greatest gift ever given. Clowns live out the words of Jesus to his disciples, "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you." (John 15:12)

Clowns also live out other words of Jesus. He called a little child and had him stand among them and he said, "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 18:2–4) Jesus calls us to see with the eyes of children. Children have wonderful imaginations, see beauty in the ordinary, aren't afraid to act silly, and laugh—sometimes just for the sheer joy of laughing. Children love and trust completely. Is it any wonder that Jesus said we have to become like a child to get into the kingdom?

Clown ministry reminds us that there is nothing wrong with being childlike. Clowns help the child within us to be free. From the moment clowns put on their make-up, don their wig, and get into their costume, they are free to reach out and share the love of God. For instance, the clown can take a simple flower and offer it to a stranger. In that uncomplicated act, the clown gives—not just a flower—but also the gift of love. The simple interaction between the clown and the stranger is an opening for God's grace—the undeserved love of God—to be received. The clown shares the flower, and for a moment the world stands still. Without knowing each other, the clown and the stranger are transformed by God's grace. Through the offering and the receiving, each one experiences life at its best—simple, uncomplicated, and full of love. Without speaking a word, willingly and humbly, the clown has ministered. The childlike nature of the clown allows for doors to be opened, hearts to be freed, and perhaps hurts that have been locked up tight to be released. The simple, uncomplicated, childlike actions of a clown—giving, sharing, and caring—can transform even the offering of a simple flower into a profound act of love. And no matter who you are, it's hard to be serious and pretentious in the face of a clown who is simply offering you a flower!

Clowns understand that a flower can put a smile on a person's face, and they know that the world always looks brighter from behind a smile , so if you were to ask a clown to name just one item in their bag of tricks, they would likely respond with laughter. It's hard not to smile when you are laughing! Laughter for the clown is a precious gift, and can be a powerful tool for healing. Not cheap laughter that is hurtful and comes at the expense of another, but genuine laughter that is

God given. Too many children grow up today not knowing the joy of genuine laughter. They are surrounded by images that should never be seen by young eyes. For the Christian clown, sharing laughter is pure joy, for God-given laughter is a gift freely offered in abundance and that can help children of all ages change their expression from a frown to a smile.

What greater purpose can one person have than to share laughter and joy with another—the two ends of a smile. In "A Catechism for Today," question 1 asks: What is God's purpose for our lives? The answer, "We have been made for joy, joy in knowing, loving, and serving God, joy in knowing, loving, and serving one another, joy in the wonder of all God's works." As clowns minister and help put smiles on people's faces through the sharing of God's love, they do so with the understanding that they are serving God.

Now humbly serving God is not unique to clowns. All Christians are called to imitate Christ's humility, including clowns. Paul told the faithful in Philippi that their attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus, who took the very nature of a humble servant. The clown embraces the call to imitate Christ by having an attitude of humble service. They follow Christ's example to serve as they minister to one another, offering support and encouragement, and lifting up those who are down. Clowns exist only to serve. However, as they serve, clowns quickly discover that they cannot do anything

without placing their trust in God. There is no other way. The trust aspect in serving is key to clown ministry. A clown freely puts themselves out in front of the crowd, humbly opening themselves before God and people. Without trust, the Christian clown would not be able to share of themselves, as they openly share God's love with others. The task would be nothing short of impossible. By placing their trust in God, they are able to take on the cares and concerns of the people, and in turn people are freely able to identify with the clown … and often the response is a smile.

As clowns share of themselves with people, it is often visually enhanced by the use of a simple object or two. The clown is able to transform an ordinary object into something special and give it new possibilities. A clown can take an oversized belt and use it as a skipping rope … a pot on the head becomes a hat … a broom can be used to sweep away people's cares … or a feather duster can be used to clean the person (Create in me, O God, a clean heart). There is enough material in God's Word that a clown is never lacking in possibilities. Even the simple balloon can be a powerful symbol. A balloon takes shape as it is filled with air. A clown can breathe life into a balloon by taking a deep breath of God's air and filling the balloon with the breath of life. By enhancing the balloon with the addition of a word such as love, serve, or joy, a simple balloon is further transformed into a powerful symbol of life.

The Clown's Prayer

Lord, as we stumble through this life
help us to create more laughter than tears,
dispense more happiness than gloom,
spread more cheer than despair.
Never let us become so indifferent that we will fail
to see the wonder in the eyes of a child
or the twinkle in the eyes of the aged.
Never let us forget that our total effort is to cheer people,
make them happy and forget at least for a moment,
all the unpleasant things in their lives.
And LORD, in our final moment,
may we hear you whisper:
"When you made my people smile,
you made me smile."
- author unknown -

Just as simple objects can be transformed, so too can ordinary locations be transformed into stages for effective clown ministry. The possible locations for clowning are as many as your imagination will allow. Preparation, however, is key. The clown must always receive permission. The leaders or administrators need to know what to expect. What is the clown or group of clowns going to do? Be transparent about the goal of the skit(s), time frame, and the interaction with the audience.

Within the church structure, there are many opportunities for offering liturgical clowning. Along with reverence and order, the clown can communicate delight and joy in worship. A simple call to worship can be offered. A prayer time of adoration and/or confession can be dramatized. A short skit introducing the theme for the service could thoughtfully set the tone. A clown or two could help take up the offering. Regardless of the place in worship, once again preparation is key. Be sensitive to where the people are—too much, too soon, can be too shocking. A gentle introduction can go a long way to a lasting relationship. Begin by having the clown sit among the people in the pews and develop an atmosphere

Smiles are a special gift from God given to us to use and share. So take your smile and share it. Find your inner clown and smile smile smile. Let the Lord of laughter, giggles, and smiles fill your day with love.

of acceptance. A clown is respectful and honours personal space. Not everyone is receptive to even the gentle holding of a hand. A caring clown needs to be sensitive to each person(s) and their boundaries. If a clown offers his/her hand in greeting, but the other person(s) declines to offer their hand in kind, the clown simply accepts the response and graciously offers a nod of understanding—and a smile. The message throughout is that God loves them just the way they are.

Beyond worship, there are many outreach possibilities. There are hospitals, nursing homes, retirement homes, day care centres, camps, schools, family nights, church dinners, Vacation Bible Schools, and community events. What about helping with a program such as Meals on Wheels? It is an opportunity for the clown to share God's love, uncover a mislaid smile, and deliver a hot meal. It is a simple act that can bring joy and colour to an often grey, ordinary, and predictable day … making the ordinary and everyday, extraordinary and wonderful, and full of smiles.

Donna McIlveen is also known as Dew Drop of Clowns Overall. Donna is a Diaconal Minister living along the St. Lawrence River near Cardinal, ON.

Three excellent books:

1. *Is There Fun After Paul—A Theology of Clowning* by Mark Liebenow (Resource Publications, copyright 1987)
2. *The Clown Ministry Handbook* by Janet Litherland (Meriwether Publishing Ltd, copyright 1982)
3. *If I Were A Clown* by Floyd Shaffer (Augsburg Publishing House, copyright 1984)

Then our mouth was filled with laughter; our tongues with shouts of joy; then it was said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them."

Psalm 126:2

Now Sarah said, "God has brought laughter for me; everyone who hears me will laugh with me."

Genesis 21:6

Decluttering Our Spiritual Lives

By L. June Stevenson

Need to declutter your life? *FlyLady* and *Mrs. Clean* stand at the ready to swoop down and organize your space. Like new age gurus, individuals and agencies are springing up with the sole purpose of creating a minimalist lifestyle for you. Not that it isn't needed!

"When I retire I am finally going to clear out my attic," a friend exclaimed. As retirement approaches, many people perceive they will have time to do the things they never seemed to get around to when they were working. I thought the same way, and yes, in almost four years, I have 'down-sized' considerably. I still can't part with my pith helmet, however! These days any time is the right time to organize your space and get rid of clutter.

Society is obsessed with decluttering. Talk shows feature guests who can come in, examine your space, organize everything into piles, and find a place for each object, whether it be off to the garbage dump, a thrift store, or put tidily away in a variety of bamboo baskets, which by the way, you can purchase anywhere from the dollar store to high-end home décor shops.

I was horrified several months ago to watch a daytime show (that's something else you can do when you retire) that showed an older couple almost driven out of their home by the wife's collecting habits. Every room in the house, even the garage, was piled high with clutter, mostly unopened bags which had been purchased "just in case." The couple had no room to live. Actually the couple had no life!

How can things reach such a disastrous state, I wondered? The situation was so bad that unmentionable things were growing under the carpet. It took a tremendous amount of work and a large warehouse space to clear everything out and display it for a huge garage sale that brought in thousands

of dollars! It also meant psychological counselling for the couple, especially the wife. The joy that lit up her face when it was all over was like that of a new convert to Christ. Her life was literally transformed.

Somewhere in between home decorating and new age reading, bookstores feature titles like, "The Complete Idiot's Guide to Decluttering" and "Clutter's Last Stand: It's Time to De-Junk Your Life." All these books are dedicated to transforming your life, renewing your spirit, and creating space for what is really important. Christian bookstores feature books like: "Living Simply: Decluttering your Heart and Home" and "Reclaim Your Life and Get Organized for Good."

Surprisingly, St. Francis of Assisi is quoted in the literature: "Start by doing what is necessary, then what is possible, and suddenly you are doing the important."

Are you hearing the message I hear, that it is time to declutter our spiritual lives? That somehow everything else in our lives is connected to our spiritual life like the knee bone is connected to the thigh bone? Perhaps you even believe as I do that now, more than ever, is the time to renew and revive our spiritual lives.

So much junk and extraneous material is poured into our minds these days. Newspapers scream, "Father abandons three-year-old child"; "Mentally-challenged used as suicide bomber"; and "Pesticides poison our water!" Unless we live cloistered lives, we are bombarded with the noise of traffic and machines, and our bodies are enveloped in second-hand smoke and pollution. For the body, there is a book called, "Body Clutter," which suggests using baby steps and routines to find your own body, presumably it is about losing weight as well.

How is a Christian to function with so many distractions, so much disruption? Mind, body, and spirit are so closely united that they spill over into everything else. It stands to reason that decluttering our homes is a first step to decluttering our bodies, and then our minds, and finally our spirits.

Be still

Be still, and know that I am God!

Be still, and know that I am.

Be still, and know.

Be still,

Be.

Be still,

Be still, and know.

Be still, and know that I am.

Be still, and know that I am God.

Psalm 46:10a. (Adapted)+

+earlier printed in *Glad Tidings*

Modern writers, whom many regard as new age, such as Eckhard Tolle, espouse ways to distance ourselves from the world's materialism and busy-ness. Tolle's latest book, *The New Earth*, has been promoted by Oprah, which means everybody and their sister is reading it. His ideas are not new, but they are phrased in modern language. He quotes Buddha, Jesus, and other great spiritual leaders, simplifying their messages in such terms that make people wonder why they never really heard the message before.

I have read halfway through *The New Earth*, and all of Tolle's, *The Power of Now*, and *Stillness Speaks*. What he writes is geared towards the non-churched, but carefully placed throughout are gems Christians know all too well: "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10). What wiser advice for freeing up our minds and spirits? How often do we stop in the midst of our busy lives, and just be still? How many times each day do we pause to reflect or meditate, removing ourselves for even a few moments from the distractions of the world?

We are told that a half-hour's exercise of our bodies each day is a healthy practice. How many minutes do we spend on our minds, on our spirits? How much time do we spend in prayer? Are we really present to what is happening around us? Do we really listen when our children want to tell us something? Are we physically and emotionally living in this moment? Tolle says that right now is all we have. The past is gone and the future never comes.

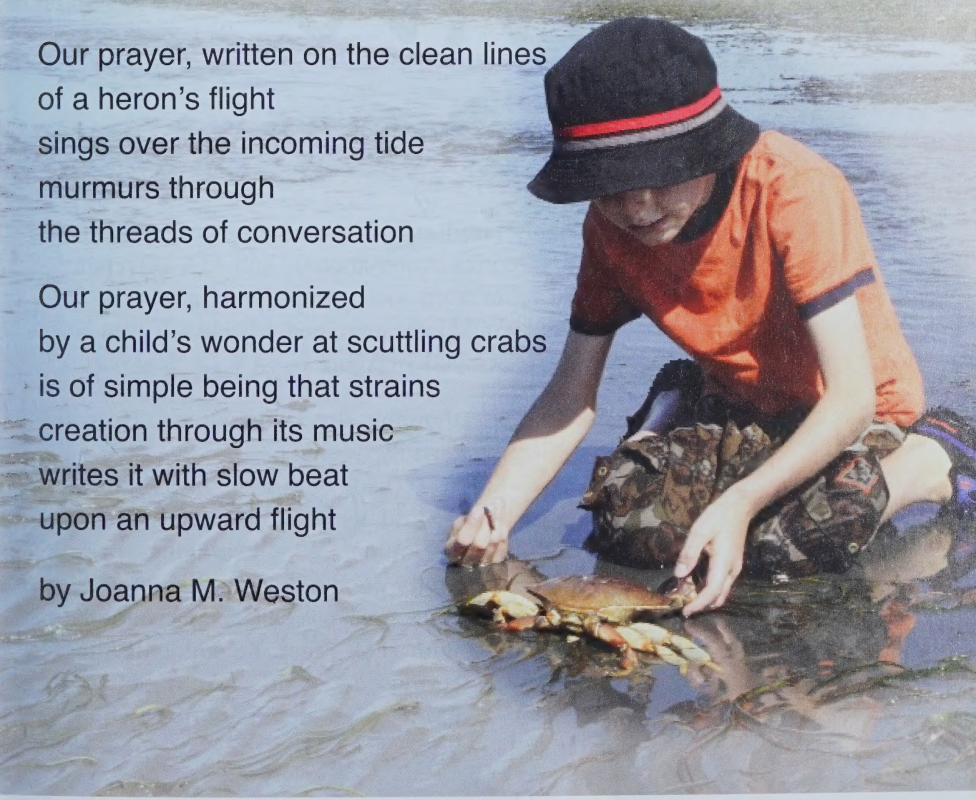
Jesus said, "Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink …" He asks us to look at the birds of the air and the lilies of the field that simply are what they are. Do we make a practice of turning to God with our stress, our burdens, or do we turn to the world for alternative solutions that pollute as well as numb the body and the mind? Can we empty our minds and our bodies of things that contaminate them, and be physically and emotionally fit to concentrate on the kingdom of God?

Nicodemus asked Jesus how anyone could be born again after having grown old? (John 3) Jesus replied that one must be born of the Spirit. The implication is

clear: To be born again means to be "born from above." It is a radical heart change that only God can do. But it comes from above, not from self-effort or from self-improvement programs. So there is more, much more to decluttering our lives. We are called to turn our lives over to God; to put our lives in God's care; to give up our ties to the material world. Are we prepared to surrender control of our lives to God, to let go of all that separates us from the love of God?

God knows there are enough resources out there, beginning with the Bible, to purify, renew, transform, and revitalize our lives. More than resources, however, we need the will and the humility to say, "I give my life over to you," and then to see where God leads. Do you have anything more important to do today?

We Were Praying on the Beach



Our prayer, written on the clean lines
of a heron's flight
sings over the incoming tide
murmurs through
the threads of conversation

Our prayer, harmonized
by a child's wonder at scuttling crabs
is of simple being that strains
creation through its music
writes it with slow beat
upon an upward flight

by Joanna M. Weston

Connecting with the Friends of John

by Ian Victor

Like most clergy, I am reasonably familiar with the 12-Step programs of AA (Alcoholics Anonymous), NA (Narcotics Anonymous), and OA (Overeaters Anonymous). Many sufferers find relief from such groups, and because of their success their reach goes farther than I would have imagined. My church even hosts such a group for Compulsive Talkers—OnandOn Anon.

Over the years, I've heard many confessions from people doing a 'Step Five' in their program, which is essentially an act of confession, "(We) admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs." Hearing such confessions is both an honour and a trust, and a reminder that there is nothing new under the sun. There are only so many ways that people can mess up. Or so I thought. But I was wrong. Horribly, terribly wrong.

"Thanks for giving me your time," he said, as he settled into the chair in my study, "I've heard that you are pretty good at keeping secrets." After some small talk, and getting comfortable with each other, he suddenly turned serious and said, "We'd better get going. My elder suggested I come to you."

"Elder?" I wondered to myself.

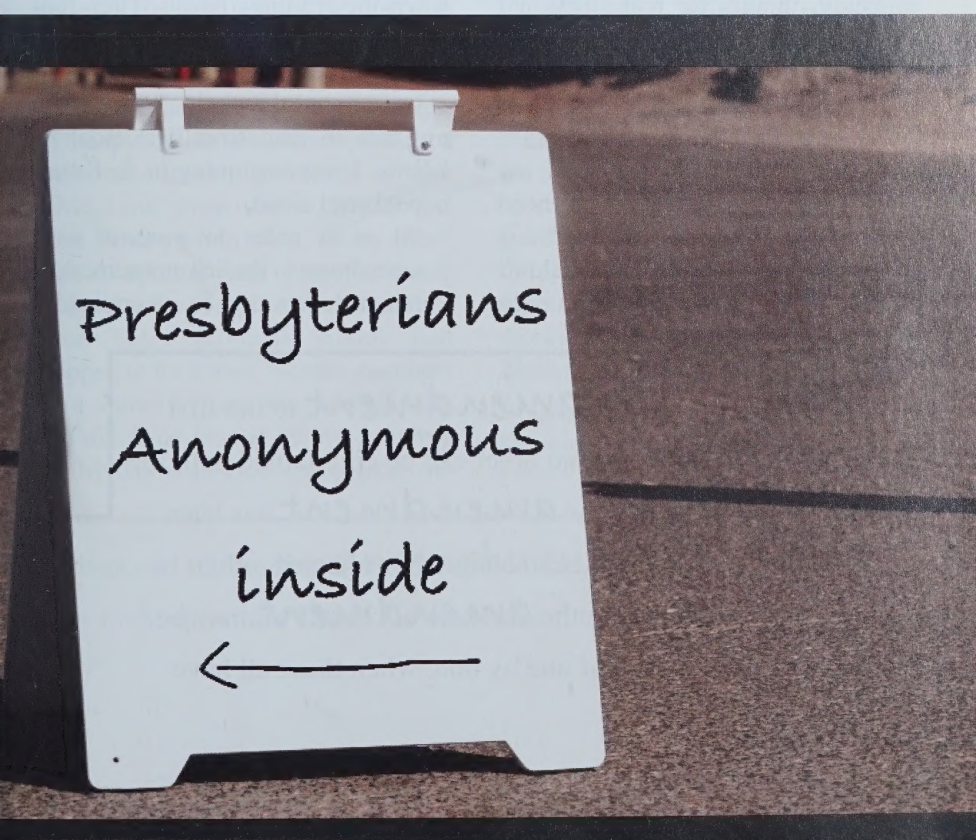
"I know some groups call them 'sponsors' but we call them 'elders' in our group."

"Just what group is this?"

"Oh, didn't I mention that when I called? I'm working through the steps with PA—Presbyterians Anonymous. You wouldn't believe some of the sad stories in our meetings. I realized I needed help too when my wife told me I was sleep-walking and shouting 'Moderator—amendment to the amendment!' for hours every night, so I've been going to the group for three months now."

"Well, this is a new one on me." I said, "I've never heard of PA before, but a Step Five is a Step Five. Why don't you tell me what's on your list, and we'll go on from there."

Four hours later, we were done. He'd gotten everything off his chest, and I had mostly just listened—asking a few clarifying questions, and absolving him in the 12-Step style at the end. It was a joy to see him leave feeling so unburdened, but I was equally glad that I'd been able to pull it off. The acting, that is. The charade. The concern I showed for him on the outside while on the inside I was falling apart with dread.



Almost everything he confessed, every behaviour and symptom he described, seemed like a description of *p* soul, *my* life. Could it be? Could it possibly have come to this—that *I* needed PA?

I surrendered to the truth soon after, thanks to the unintended intervention of a friend. "How was your day off?" he asked over the phone.

"Great!" I answered, "I got up early because I didn't want to sleep away one minute of my free time. And then I hit the books—the A&P's, the 'Acts and Proceedings of the General Assembly.' I've been tracing every hint or statement about Supralapsarianism since 1875.[1] It was a fabulous day! I went at it until midnight, though for some reason I can't remember the afternoon hours at all. Anyway, I could hardly sleep afterwards, I was so excited. I think this is really going to help my preaching!"

After a long stony silence, my friend replied, "Buddy. You need help. Now. Seriously, man. This is getting way too weird!" He wouldn't let me go until he'd pulled from me a promise that I'd go to a PA meeting that night.

It was in the basement of an Anglican Church 25 miles from home. I felt so humiliated and ashamed that I couldn't face running into anyone I knew—especially from the ministerial. I grabbed a scone and a cup of weak tea and looked for a seat to hide in, but the chairs were all in a circle. When the meeting began with people introducing themselves, the moment of truth came. "I'm Ian, and I'm a... a... Presbyterian." I hardly heard the happy group response: "Hi, Ian!" because of the sound of my heart pounding.

Things felt a little more comfortable when the readings began. They took turns reading a section at a time, passing the Big Book, that one with the blue cover, around the circle. When it was my turn to read from The Book of Forms, I was beginning to feel some hope. I read aloud,

> "It is in order to propose an amendment to the first amendment, but no other can be entertained

It is in order to propose an **amendment** to the first **amendment**, but no other can be entertained until the **amendment** to the **amendment** has been disposed of; when this has been adopted or rejected, other **amendments** to the **amendment** may be considered and disposed of one by one; when these all have

> until the amendment to the amendment has been disposed of; when this has been adopted or rejected, other amendments to the amendment may be considered and disposed of one by one; when these all have been disposed of, the first amendment is voted on in answer to the question, "Shall the motion be thus amended—yea or nay?"

Blinded by tears of joy and regret, I couldn't finish the section, and passed the book to my left. It was patently obvious at last—PA was where I belonged.

I listened as people told their horror stories of the past, tales of membership classes, ordinations, meetings, even brutal stories of Assemblies past. And the group had all types—ministers, lay people, adherents, elders, deacons and deaconesses, members of the WMS, and even some 'Old Boys' from Presbyterian Men. Every theological opinion was present, every background was represented, and even some UA's (Uniteds Anon) had dropped in for a visit. But the members were united by one thing—they were all Friends of John (Calvin), escaping day by day with God's help from the progressive and fatal grip of being Presbyterian.

The last speaker reminded us of the literature available—The Book of Forms, PCPaks past and present, Calvin's Institutes for the real keeners, church bulletins from all over—and then a collection was taken. I couldn't find a visitor's envelope—I'll raise that with them if I come back—but no one else seemed to mind. We closed by standing in a circle, holding hands (although there were several who kept to themselves feeling that was too intimate) and repeating the Salinity Prayer—God grant me the salinity to be salt of the earth, leaven to permeate the whole loaf, and the Overtures to know the difference. With a hearty "Keep coming back—it's predestined" the meeting concluded, and several came forward to welcome me and invite me to another meeting.

"I'd love to come," I said, "but I've got Presbytery and a Session Meeting to prepare for, and 17 committee meetings this month, and I'm busy working on this great article for *Glad Tidings* on Supralapsarianism ..."

[1] Editor's note: For those who are interested, Supralapsarianism, is indeed a real word! It refers to a kind of Calvinist and deals with election.

been disposed of, the first amendment is voted on in answer to the question, "Shall the motion be thus amended—yea or nay?"

A Sense of Humour
—the eighth gift of the spirit

by Jim Czegledi

A sense of humour is the ability to focus on the 'funny' in life and not always on the fatal. It gives us the perspective to see a different dimension of life—the less serious side. It is first a sense of self, who we are and how we connect with others. It is the wry observation of reality. Faith is the theological observation of reality, the observation of things hoped for (Hebrews 11:1). Both humour and faith surround us. Reinhold Niebuhr, a German theologian, once said that humour and faith both deal with the incongruities, the incompatibilities of the human condition. Humour in its healthiest form is about life's incongruities—the adult things small children say and the funny things that we see everyday, such as seeing dogs or cats at play.

Humour, he says, deals with the immediate incongruities of a bishop slipping on a banana peel. Faith deals with ultimate incongruities where the same person should have a vision of eternal life and still be mortal. Or where sinful, corrupt creatures like ourselves are loved and forgiven by God, our Creator. In both cases, we can 'stand outside ourselves' and see ourselves more clearly by gaining proper perspective and a "God's eye view."

Laughter, like prayer, can transform us by providing hope. In laughter, as well as in prayer, we transcend our world as we know it. Prayer and laughter can help us rise above our problems. They both can temporarily re-engage us from our current reality and provide a pause that restores, only to reengage us with a renewed energy. Humour is like taking a mini vacation from our worries and our stress. It helps to remind us of where we are, and of who and whose we are.

One day last winter, I took a break from bemoaning the fact that I had to shovel 15 centimetres of snow from my driveway while my neighbour's two young children were making snowmen and playing in the freshly-fallen white stuff. After seeing these children at play, I adopted the same attitude and began to make snow angels in the spot that I was to shovel. I later looked at my task from a different perspective. Humour, like everything else in life, depends on your perspective. It allows us to stand outside ourselves and see the incongruities around us.

Having a sense of humour provides distance from our reality and problems by allowing us to see the larger picture and gain perspective. It is like seeing ourselves in a satellite photo taken from space. Or, when you are in a mall or on a subway and look at the map to

find that "you are here." Humour reminds us of where we are. From here, we can better think of where we need to go. One of the greatest discoveries ever made was when Galileo made the remarkable discovery of our solar system. He found that the sun and not the earth was the centre of the universe. This reminds us that the universe does not revolve around us or our problems.

When Theodore Roosevelt was the President of the United States, he would take strolls around his home at night in upstate New York and gaze heavenward and look up at the stars and the galaxies. Having contemplated his place in the limitless universe, he would say, "Now I can go to sleep, because I feel small enough." A sense of humour likewise can give us the distance needed to stand beyond ourselves and get a "God's eye view."

The British writer, G.K. Chesterton, said that the reason angels fly is because they think of themselves lightly. Taking ourselves lightly and laughing at some of the things we do does not reflect poor self-esteem. Rather, it reflects a healthy sense of self-concept—we are strong enough to poke a little fun at ourselves and laugh. It also will make people identify with us easier and break down barriers. Taking yourself lightly says to others that you are comfortable with who you are and gives them permission to lower their guard, relax, and just be human. It can also teach us to take our work seriously and ourselves lightly. It gives us the ability to laugh and especially to laugh at ourselves. It can save us from false pretense and pride and from confusing our job description with our life description or some false self image we are trying to live up to.

People whose faith and trust are in God and not ultimately in themselves, are people who can take themselves less seriously. They know that they are not the centre of the universe, and can have a sense of humour about themselves, their achievements, and failures. Take an elderly Presbyterian woman who firmly believed in divine predestination. One day she fell down a flight of stairs, got up, dusted herself off and said, "Thank God, that's over with." Humour helps us to accept our limitations and to come to terms with our own mortality.

The saving grace of humour in the end, and the reason it is considered the eighth gift of the Spirit, is that it saves us from ourselves and it reminds us that in the midst of our human foibles and success, there is only one saviour and we thank God for that. A sense of humour helps us to keep things in proportion. It reminds us that the first words of the Christian life belong to life not death, joy not sorrow, laughter not weeping. The last words 'not to death', but to resurrection and eternal life!

Jim Czegledi works part time as a minister; he also coaches people and speaks on the subject of how you can develop your own sense of humour. He can be reached at jim.czegledi@sympatico.ca.

Opportunities Abound!

94th Annual Council Meeting

by Colleen Wood

Look around and I am sure you can see opportunities to play, work, pray, serve, and rest. That is what your WMS Council saw at Crieff Hills on May 3–6. Once again we were blessed with great weather as we did the work of the Council, and took time to play and learn along the way. This year's theme, Opportunity Knocks, was a perfect background to the opportunities we saw before us.

Opportunity to Play

We spent our first night getting to know one another with a few games, and then enjoying the music of The Lost Pilgrims. Celtic folk music, bluegrass, and even some tunes from Neil Young, Johnny Cash, and Leonard Cohen had our feet moving to the beat. The last song, People Get Ready, also encouraged us in our work for the week …

All you need is faith
Don't need no ticket
Just thank the Lord!

June Campbell summed up their performance beautifully in her thank you to the band. She thanked them for "music that honours the stories of God's people!"

Opportunity to Learn

We had many opportunities to learn over our four days together. First, we spent time together learning about change through two workshops presented by Tori Smit. Tori reminded us of recent messages of change: Obama's campaign slogan of Stand for Change, and our own moderator's message that congregations must change.

She helped us to see why we don't change, including fear of failure, conflict, and a loss of identity, but told us that change is not only inevitable, but is necessary for renewal and revitalization. Tori also had us identify a possible area of change for the WMS. She then had us consider how we would work to implement this change in healthy ways. Change will never be easy, but with the proper prayer and preparations, it just might lead to positive results!

We also spent time learning about refugees, and the 2009–2010 mission study on refugees. Margaret Douglas, from Knox, Woodstock, spoke about her experience, along with the Say family—Burmese refugees sponsored

Say ladies with Janet Brewer and Bonnie Mooney

Say family with Karen Plater and Margaret Douglas

All you need is faith
Don't need no ticket
Just thank the Lord!

by Knox. Margaret took the initiative on refugee sponsorship after seeing an advertisement on the PCC website. She prepared, and made a presentation to her session and they said yes right away! The process had its challenges, including lots of paperwork, a long period of waiting, and translation challenges, but overall it has been a good experience. Margaret has had the opportunity to work closely with the Say family, and has enjoyed becoming a 'soccer mom' to their children, sharing many meals with the family, and learning from them. Knox is currently looking forward to the arrival of others from the extended Say family who will be arriving shortly.

Lorette Noble, representative from the Catholic Women's League; Druse Bryan, WMS President; Mary MacLeod, representative from the Atlantic Mission Society; and Rick Fee, General Secretary of the Life and Mission Agency.

Lawrence Pentelow, Managing Director of Crieff, also gave us a presentation on the Capital Campaign they are embarking on. Phase one will include five self-contained suites, one barrier free suite, and a reading room. Phase 2 will see Crieff add additional bedrooms and meeting rooms. It was exciting to hear how Crieff is preparing

to serve the needs of the church well into the future!

The Rev. Rick Fee brought highlights from the Life and Mission Agency. The Life and Mission Agency will need to change as financial cuts occur. We have seen some staff changes in the past year, such as the hiring of Colin Carmichael in Communications, and some more in the future due to the retirement of Dorothy Henderson. Rick spoke of these challenges in positive ways as he looks for creative ways to continue important ministries. Rick also spoke very positively about the number of ecumenical partnerships we have, such as our work with the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, and Action by Church Together.

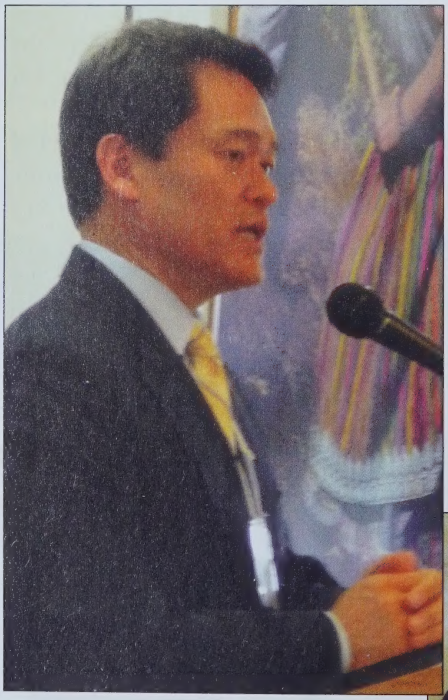
On Tuesday afternoon, Gloria Wasacase, told her story as a former staff member at Cecelia Jeffrey Residential School. She began her work there as a young woman in 1959 and it will always be a part of her. She has had past students from the school thank her on the street for her work at the school.

Druse Bryan, and the Rev. Rick Fee also spoke on the future of mission. Both feel that communication is key

Emily and Eunice Bisset

and that there is good communication between the WMS and the Life and Mission Agency. As well, we will continue to be involved in justice issues, and must continue to focus on certain areas—doing excellent work in a few key areas! We know there will be challenges—budget shortfalls, and changes in demographics—but we need to keep talking, sharing, and trying new things.

We also received a very informative report on human trafficking from June Campbell which will be included in a future edition of *Glad Tidings*.



Rev. Cheol Soon Park, Moderator of the 134th General Assembly

Opportunity to Worship

Our theme, Opportunity Knocks, was presented through an in-depth bible study led by Rev. Dr. Emily Bisset. We began by looking at the verse, "Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come into you and eat with you, and you with me." (Revelation 3:20) We looked at several paintings of this passage and considered their meaning.

Emily also gave us great exegetical information on Revelation to aid in our understanding of this passage, and the entire book of Revelation. That, along with our own discussion, helped us to learn and grow in our understanding of scripture.

On our final morning, we enjoyed a moving worship service from the Rev. Cheol Soon Park, Moderator of the 134th General Assembly. He began by giving us a review of his last 11 months. As moderator he has had a busy year, but he has enjoyed learning new things about this country, and about

Some participants from the WMS exposure tour to Eastern Europe catch up.

Millie Freeman, Lottie Sutherland, and Catherine Blatch

the church (PCC), and also travelling overseas to Eastern Europe, and Korea. He has seen that the energy and strength in our church comes from diversity, and he challenges us to pray for congregations that are struggling. He has met many good people working for the kingdom of God.

He reminded us that the PCC wouldn't be what it is today without the WMS. Finally, he challenged us to do all that we do for the next generation! We closed our time together with the celebration of Communion.

Opportunity to Work

The work of the WMS includes hearing reports from the past year. The Book Room had a challenging year with the closing of Canada's largest Christian bookstore, Mitchell's Family Bookstore (that had recently taken over Blessings). As the largest distributor of Christian books in Canada, this left The Book Room scrambling to fill orders. Aside from this, The Book Room is thriving as they continue to excel in the area of customer service!

The Personnel Committee continues to keep busy with our own WMS 'baby boom.' Alexis McKeown has recently returned from maternity leave, and Tricia Browne will return later this year. Grace Kim was a wonderful asset this year as Tricia's replacement. This summer, Colleen Wood will be beginning maternity leave, and we welcome Rev. Heather Jones to replace her during her leave.

In addition, after many years, Mary Taylor retired as Financial Officer. Her position has been filled by Elza Furzer. The staff continues to work well as a team under the leadership of the Rev. Sarah Kim.

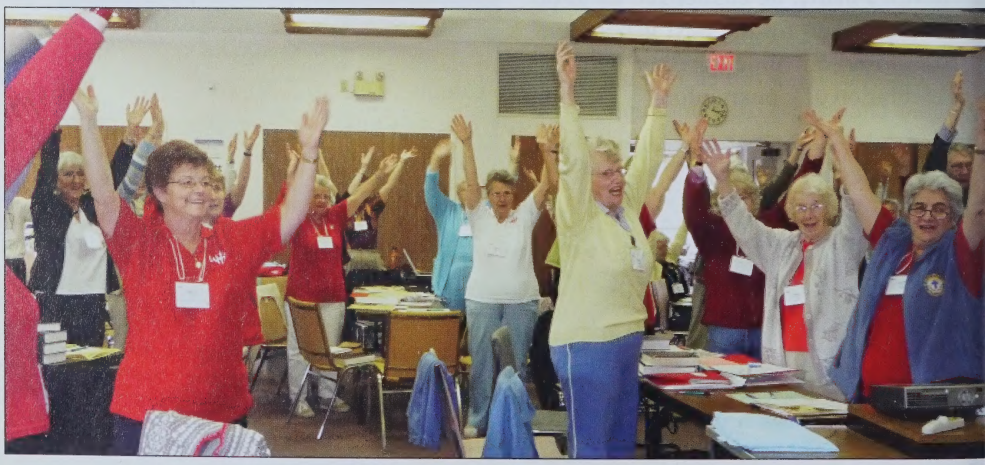
The Program Committee reported on their many activities from the previous

"Listen!
I am standing at the door, knocking;
if you hear my voice and open the door,
I will come into you and eat with you,
and you with me." (Revelation 3:20)

year, including the resources from Mission Awareness Sunday, written by the Rev Donald MacKay and the Rev. Marion Barclay-MacKay. They also let us know that a Resources Book is being produced by the Rev. Lynda Reid and the Rev. Anne Yee-Hibbs. The Program Committee reminds us all to return our resource evaluation forms. This past year, they only received 40 completed forms out of a possible 300!

Finally, the Editorial Committee reported on a positive year. The circulation of *Glad Tidings* was down again, but financial numbers are solid. The committee reminds everyone that *Glad Tidings* is not just for WMS members. There are articles of interest to anyone interested in mission.

The work of your Council also includes decision making, and after much discussion a variety of motions was passed. Likely the most profound are some constitutional changes. Noting that we have men who attend WMS meetings, and even have men as members, we have made the language of our constitution more inclusive. As well, we made some changes that allow for the new structure recently approved



Council Executive for 2009–2010

within the Saskatchewan Synodical. Since these are changes to our constitution, they must be sent to the General Assembly this June for final discussion and approval.

We also made some decisions regarding WMS Mission trips—our 2010 mission trip will be to the Cariboo Mission. Council decided that we will focus on one mission trip every year, alternating between a Canadian and International destination.

Finally, we decided to change the name of our WMS newsletter. WMS Ways will now become WMS Matters!

And indeed, the WMS does matter. I encourage everyone to consider the WMS and the opportunities before us. It may require change, but as Tori Smit says, change is inevitable and necessary for renewal and revitalization. May each of us consider small ways in which we can renew and revive our own WMS groups in 2009!

A special thanks to those individuals who are leaving Council Executive this year. Your contribution to the work of the national WMS is greatly appreciated and you will be missed.

Marg Befus, Eunice Bisset, June Campbell, Joan Hilliard, Nancy Miller, Marie Schandlen, Betty Siverns, Wilma Welsh

Church Mission Study 2009–2010

Refugees

Study by Glynis Williams

Many people are forced from their homeland, fleeing conflict, persecution or natural disaster. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) counts 10 million people as refugees outside of their country of origin, as well as another 10 million who are internally displaced, stateless, or refugees who have just returned home. This staggering number of uprooted men, women, and children, young and old, is overwhelming for most of us to imagine.

As so often happens, it is the most vulnerable who are most affected—75% of the world's refugees are women and children. Most of them live in appalling circumstances in refugee camps or in the slum areas of large cities in the developing world.

The Bible has been called the ultimate immigration handbook, with its

5 ways to involve your congregation in using this study

1. Circulate the study book to 10 different people to browse.
   - Think of people who are chairs of committees. They might be inspired to start a meeting with a story of a refugee or use a prayer from a session.
2. Prepare a bulletin board display, banner, poster, fact sheets, photo display, or resource table around the information provided in the study.
   - Think about preparing all these for Mission Awareness Sunday.
3. Use some of the stories or ideas from a session and create a children's story to share with the children and congregation during worship.

numerous accounts of people on the move that are fleeing war, searching for food, and seeking religious freedom.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada has chosen the theme of Refugees for their 2009-2010 study. Learn from refugees and migrants about being displaced. Discover what the bible has to share about being uprooted. Learn from our churches and partners about reaching out to uprooted people. Along the way, you will enrich your own faith and walk with God.

The study will share stories of people and families who have been uprooted. It will explore why they are refugees, their own country's story, their experience in Canada, and how people have helped them. The fact that we are called to care will be addressed through each session's biblical reflections and questions.

As a result, you will become more welcoming and understanding of people that are uprooted—refugees, migrant workers, and immigrants. You will also gain an understanding of the refugee process in Canada. Finally, you will gain an understanding of the refugee ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Study available early in the fall.

Rev. Glynis Williams is a former nurse and has been ordained since 1989. She currently works with refugees and is interested in fair trade and overseas development. In Spring 2007 she spent four months in Syria working with the UN Commission of Refugees.

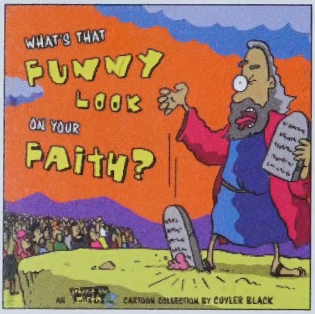
Rev. Williams was involved in the first Interim Ministry project in the Presbytery of Montreal. Her focus is on Congregational Development.

- Or prepare a drama or puppet show for the children to share with the congregation during the children's time.

4. Prepare a short Minute for Mission for each session to share with the congregation.
   - Use these in bulletins or during worship. Think about using them the week after your group has studied a session, then members are prepared to answer questions or start conversations during coffee hour.

5. Use the study at a congregational mission weekend or retreat.
   - Or host a youth group for a weekend using the study with the young people.

Book Reviews



What's That Funny Look on Your Faith? **by Cuyler Black**

Sometimes, I think we take ourselves too seriously. We are afraid to look at some of the more unusual stories in the Bible and enjoy them for their humour. This collection of cartoons will help you loosen up and laugh about your faith. It includes such off-the-wall cartoons, as Adam and Eve looking through a clothing catalogue, Noah getting drenched waiting for some of the slower animals to make their way onto the ark, and Mary and Joseph discussing a name for their child.

The collection is wonderfully illustrated and put together in a small hard cover book perfect for gift giving. Consider buying a copy for your teen, youth worker, or minister, or for a friend in a need of a good laugh.

Greetings cards are also available to mark all your special occasions with a good laugh!

Just Hand Over the Chocolate and No One Will Get Hurt **by Karen Scalf Linamen**

"You're not alone. When we feel stressed and overwhelmed, sometimes we just need a little chocolate. Now!"

We all have those days—sometimes it seems that they get closer and closer together. We are tired, overwhelmed, and running on empty. Linamen gives us suggestions that will help to lift our spirits and bring joy and wholeness to our lives. And Linamen knows what the dark periods look like, having lived with undiagnosed clinical depression for a number of years.

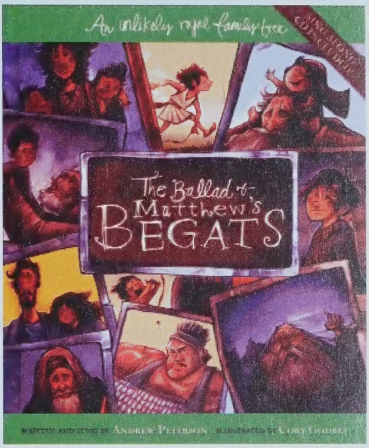
I would suggest that this book would be great if you are going through a particularly challenging time, but it might even help prevent one if you are not currently there. Her fun ideas and easy writing style might encourage you to try something new just for you. What I really appreciated about this book was the variety of options she gave—from ideas that took as little as 60 seconds, to longer experiences, to some with no cost, to lots of low cost options. So, whether you decide to start singing show tunes, plant a garden, or dream

some dreams after reading this book, I expect the most important part is that you might just feel a little more in control of your life, or a bit more joyful. And if you don't, Linamen gives real advice about finding professional help when you need it.

***The Ballad of Matthew's Begats* written and sung by Andrew Peterson, illustrated by Cory Godbey**

You are reading your bible and you get to those long sections of genealogy: "Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez, the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram." (Matthew 1:2–3) What do you do? Most of us scan over the list at best. Yet, these passages have meaning. These passages are the genealogies of God's people—of us.

This book may change all that! This is a great children's book that works through the genealogy from Matthew's gospel, beginning with Abraham and ending with Mary, the mother of Christ. Interesting pictures, and small facts about the people listed will have you engaged. It even comes with a CD containing a song of the genealogy that will have you singing along in no time.



Although this is a great children's book, it could also be used to introduce bible studies, as a fun reminder that we are part of God's family, or as a great way to begin a discussion on your own, more recent, family tree.

***Surprised by Joy* by C.S. Lewis**

Surprised by Joy is Lewis's autobiography. In this book, Lewis discusses his early faith, his later period of doubt, and finally his return to the faith. The entire book is the story of Lewis's search for joy. Although I found parts of this book a little slow, overall, it was a interesting read. For anyone who has read other books by Lewis, this book can add profound meaning to his other writings. It has both honesty and humour, and would make for a great summer read!

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Ed and Jackie Hoekstra
Malawi

Salutations.

Several weeks ago we went up north to Muzuzu as Ed was preaching at the Chipitula Church. The people were very welcoming, and the area had many more trees, rolling hills, and breath-taking views. There were also a lot fewer people and cars.

On our way, we saw many interesting signs as usual. One of them said, "AIDS is not Witchcraft. It is real. Wear a Condom!" Wow, I thought that's pretty straightforward. After reading the newspaper later that week, I realized that we had driven through a trading centre and that AIDS was a real problem in that area. People come to this area from all over. There was a local Community AIDS Action Group that was handing out literature and free condoms, but they had no money to continue. They were feeling overwhelmed by the magnitude of the problem.

Jacob and I were asked to read scriptures in the church service, and since there was no electricity it was a battle to see the words on the page. Still, the church was joyful, full of singing, worship, and praise. There were 400 people in attendance for both services. Every time we are in a new worshiping community I think that this must be the best choir I have heard, and this one was no exception.

We also visited the Ekwendeni Mission which the Presbyterian Church supports. If you are Presbyterian, you should be extremely pleased with this mission. It houses a hospital, an AIDS testing and counselling service, a school, a seminary, and a college for nursing training. The place truly is the hands and feet of Jesus—beautiful grounds and an impressive amount of love and goodwill pour from the place.

Good things continue to happen at the Tidzalerana Club in Blantyre where people with physical and developmental disabilities receive love and care. Dr. Sally is coming every week to do physiotherapy exercises with children. Just a little bit of movement will help these children and make them more comfortable. We have been able to buy some wheelchairs, physiotherapy ball and mats, and pay for Dr. Sally's services. The African mothers of children with disabilities should be put into the *Guinness Book of World Records*. They show amazing perseverance, patience, endurance, long-suffering, joy, peace, wisdom, and of course musical ability. Strong is too weak a word to describe these women—they are rock solid mountains.

Ed also continues to work in the prison, and he came home rather pale after his time there yesterday. His Bible

study went well—the men sing the songs more now that they know them, they are more comfortable with Ed, and there is more discussion. Then, he was asked to go to the hospital part of the prison. Ed was not prepared to walk into a large room, which they call the hospital, full of men lying on the floor, one beside the other—men with AIDS, lesions, sticks covered with flesh. These sick men stank, and were hungry and preparing to die alone. There is no money for food, no money for soap, and no money for blankets. The government has no money for the prisons. Ed has been busy to find where he can get money for Chimanga.

Well dear friends and family. Tsalani Bwino. Stay well.

Peace, Jackie

"Then the spirit picked me up, the spirit carried me, courage surged within me."

David Pandy-Szekeres
2008 Report (edited)

Like many other places in the world, the Ukraine was showing the first signs of economic difficulty as 2008 began. The cost of food had been slowly rising and family budgets—already meagre—were proving less than sufficient for basic needs. Fuel prices spiralled upwards throughout the early spring and reached record levels by early summer. By the early autumn, the economy had begun to seriously unravel and more and more people found themselves without jobs. By the end of the year, the official rate of inflation was 24%. This economic climate has impacted many of the activities and undertakings in which I am involved, yet we forge ahead. Whatever happens, we are assured of God's presence.

A. Missionaries and Mission

An important advance was made in the status of the missionaries with the Reformed Church of the sub-Carpathian Ukraine (RCCU) at their General Synod Meeting in February 2008. They passed a motion to officially recognize the missionaries and to extend status to them within the church organization. There was even a motion passed whereby the social insurance and other similar mandatory contributions of two of the missionaries would be paid from the RCCU's general budget, yet we are still waiting for that motion to be implemented.

Overseas Staff Birthdays

September

7 - David Villalonga, Nicaragua

16 - Arlene Onuoha, Nigeria

October

20 - Lezlie Cowley Allison, Cameroon

27 - David Josiah Allison, Cameroon

B. Christian Education

The RCCU secondary schools have had a very challenging year. With the economic crisis, we are not sure how we will be able to fund our four RCCU secondary schools. Having somehow limped to the end of the last academic year, our school funds are virtually exhausted.

Launching into the new academic year, beginning this past September, required some serious financial adjustments and a healthy dose of faith. Utilities and energy costs had increased over the last year, as well as teachers' and workers' salaries. The RCCU leadership was forced to increase—by 67%—the contribution required of students to enroll in these schools, all this when the families of prospective students were themselves facing heightened uncertainty in the status of their employment (if they had any) and in the purchasing power of their income. At present, there is enough money to ensure the operation of the schools until the end of March (2009). The outlook for the subsequent academic year, 2009–2010, looks even grimmer.

The schools, and their ethnic Hungarian students, have also fallen victim to an upwelling of Ukrainian nationalism which gives unmistakable evidence of an intolerance of cultural and historic differences. According to legislation passed over a year ago, final secondary school examinations, known as the state baccalaureate examination, are to be administered exclusively in the Ukrainian language, regardless of the language in which students have been educated. The same legislation furthermore stipulates that these results will serve as the basis for gaining admission to universities or colleges in the Ukraine. A total of 106 students successfully graduated from the four RCCU schools in June 2008, but only 70 of these students passed the baccalaureate examination administered in Ukrainian

In the immediate wake of the Christmas season four members of our family celebrate birthdays. Every year we receive a large number of Christmas and birthday greeting cards from WMS groups and PCC congregations for which we are most grateful. We hang these cards in our home so that they can be an integral part of our Christmas celebration. We wish to thank all those who have sent cards, have said prayers for us and supported us in any way.

and were able to gain admission to higher institutions of learning. This is in stark contrast to the results of the previous years when over 90% of graduating students were able to pursue studies at a subsequent level.

C. Agricultural Consulting Services

The contribution of the Women's Missionary Society allowed us to lay the foundation for the Terra Dei Foundation's model farm this past year.[1] A full-time manager was hired and various kinds of tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, beets, cabbages, and cauliflower were planted this past spring. Several agricultural field days were organized for the benefit of local market gardeners. Near the end of the season, the vegetables were harvested; some were given to the church's diaconal kitchen and some were sold at a local market. One greenhouse was completed by the late summer and two others will soon be ready. The fruit trees are to be planted this spring. Beyond the activities centred around the model farm, the foundation continues to provide consulting services and field education in vegetable and fruit growing for all those who are interested.

D. Mission Trips

We received many groups this year, including the Moderator, the Reverend Cheol Soon Park, accompanied by his wife, Mrs. Karen Mi Ryoung Park, and Associate Secretary for International Ministries, Ron Wallace. They spent a busy two weeks meeting partner church representatives and our mission staff and visiting associated mission sites in Hungary, Ukraine, and Rumania in the early part of the summer. Intimately familiar with the troubled modern history of Korea, the Moderator was able to put into its proper context the past and present hardships of which the representatives of the partner Hungarian churches spoke. The joint efforts of the past years, however,

Commencement ceremonies at the Reformed Church Secondary School in Péterfalva in June 2008. Elementary school children (among them Julie Pandy-Szekeres) associated with the school faculty lead the class to the church while strewing spring flower petals on the path.

showed great cause to give thanks for God's providence and to reaffirm partnerships grounded in a common faith and calling.

We also received Youth in Mission and Cairn volunteers. They spent five weeks participating in Christian summer camps for children and youth, sharing their talents, skills, expertise, and their commitment to the Gospel. This visit was part of an exchange program whereby two camp leaders from here were able to join the Canadians on their return trip home and spend four weeks at Cairn, where they tried to immerse themselves as much as possible in a PCC camp experience.

Finally, in October, we hosted a Women's Missionary Society group. The twelve-member group arrived in Budapest to begin a two-week tour which took them to some of the points in Hungary, Ukraine, Rumania, and Croatia where local Reformed Church communities, institutions, or individuals faithfully labour in their tasks to surmount the challenges which they face on a daily basis. The trip allowed the women to learn about the culture, history, and the challenges of the people, and to experience some of the work of the RCCU. It provided an expression of solidarity among our groups. With a busy itinerary that included hearing opera, harvesting vegetables, and meeting with ladies' groups and many partners, none of their energies nor spirits ever flagged. This made me recall that while in Canada on furlough a year or so ago, I read and reviewed the book *Certain Women Amazed Us*. At the time, simply from the reading, I was already deeply impressed by the commitment, perseverance, and sheer energy of the WMS and its members. Having spent two weeks travelling with the members of this organization, I can wholeheartedly say that the above mentioned title could have hardly been better chosen. Thus, it cannot come as a surprise when I say that the experience lived in October 2008 was inspired by the same source as was everything which is recorded in the book—that of God calling each of us to serve Him and our neighbour in the way which Jesus taught us.

E. Family

The daily routine of school and other lessons for the children keeps everyone busy in his/her own right. Like most mothers, Anna has to make sure that they are up on time, washed, fed, and dressed properly before they head off for classes. The evenings are often hectic when there is homework to be done and no one is willing to do it. But none of the children have yet been thrown out of school. So as far as things go, in every respect we are all doing well. Recognizing this as a gift, we are most thankful for it.

[1] The Terra Dei Foundation project has been supported through the co-ordinated efforts of the Presbyterian World Service and Development agency.

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Please keep your WMS Council and the WMS staff in your prayers throughout the year!

Synodical

The **Synodical of Quebec & Eastern Ontario** held their annual meeting in Westminster Presbyterian Church, Smiths Falls, on April 17–18. After the registration and refreshments, the Rev. Jim Patterson led the gathering music. Lanark–Renfrew President, Lottie Sutherland, extended a warm welcome, and Katie Grant gave a history of Westminster Church. Synodical president, Lois Klempa, opened the meeting with prayer, and Genevieve Holding, recording secretary, took the roll call and read the minutes of the previous annual meeting.

The reports were received and the three delegates to Council in May were introduced: Ruth Davidson, Margaret Reynolds, and Lottie Sutherland. Donna McIlveen of St. Andrew's, Ottawa, gave a PowerPoint presentation on One-Hundred Years of Diaconal History. She brought us up-to-date on past

About 140 women gathered in Leamington April 21–22 for the 62nd annual meeting of the Synodical of Southwestern Ontario. In the photo are presidents and past presidents of the society.
Front Row: Erlma Haldenby, Kinlough; Pauline Lindsay, St. Thomas; Shirley Aitcheson, Stratford; Council President Druse Bryan, Montreal; Bonnie Arbour, Sarnia; Joan Wilsie, Woodstock; Marion McKenzie, St. Thomas; Jackie Cruickshank, Simcoe; Second Row: Reverend Anne Yee-Hibbs, Area Educational Consultant, Hamilton; Carolyn Reid, Leamington; Christine Cummings, Niagara; Shirley Miller, Paris; Marilyn Rawson, Sarnia; Back Row: Robina Alexander, Listowel; Jess Knox, synodical president, Hamilton; Marian Weldon, London; Joan Wagner, Sarnia; Mary Lou McKay, London; Margaret McCullough, London; Gail Connor, Dundas. (Leamington Post photo)

members of the Synodical who have served. The Rev. Jim Patterson gave the grace, followed by a tasty supper in the church hall. The evening program consisted of a worship service led by the Rev. Patterson, the Rev. Rick Fee, General Secretary of the Life and Mission Agency, and Druse Bryan, National President of the WMS.

After coffee on Saturday morning, 56 participants met in the sanctuary and Anita Mack and Christine Ball, regional staff for the synod, led the worship service. Anita spoke on The Day of Resurrection. Candles were lit as members prayed for various countries around the world. Grace Thornley Brown, of the Montreal Presbyterial, gave the In Memoriam. The reports were adopted as a whole. Lottie Sutherland led the participants in a singing exercise break. This was followed by a panel discussion on Mission Today led by Druse Bryan and Rick Fee. Excellent comments and questions were raised.

After lunch, the Rev. Patterson once again led us in a singsong. Druse Bryan shared her mission trip experience to Eastern Europe. Courtesies were extended to all, Margaret Reynolds installed the officers for 2009, and Lois Klempa closed the meeting with prayer.

-Vivian Young

Presbyterial

Paris Presbyterial held their Annual Meeting on February 21 at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Simcoe. The theme for the day was Come Celebrate the Past, Present, and Possibilities. 45 ladies registered. Rev. Anne Yee-Hibbs led devotions on Remembering Who We Are and a bible study on Past, Present, and Future Possibilities.

Jessie Knox, Synodical president, presented a 100th Anniversary certificate to the St. Paul's Mission Circle. Their WMS was organized in Simcoe in 1909 with seven members. Deedie Campbell, president of the auxiliary, accepted the certificate on behalf of the Simcoe WMS ladies.

Rev. Ian Shaw, our guest speaker, spoke and showed slides from his time in Guyana. Ian worked as a pastor, and his wife, Linda, worked with the Sunday school doing teacher training and curriculum production. Ian spoke of the people he got to know in Guyana and he encouraged us to celebrate the people in our lives.

Our afternoon speaker was Diane Boys from Tillsonburg. Diane went on a Youth in Mission (YIM) to India in June 2008. She showed pictures and spoke about her experiences and how the trip changed her perception of the church. She saw the ripple effect that the Dr. John Buchanan began when he first arrived in the Bhil mission field in 1897. Diane would encourage other youth to participate in YIM.

-Elaine Stevens

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Corunna hosted the Annual Meeting of the **Sarnia Presbyterial** on March 26

with 33 members and 4 guests answering the roll call. The theme was Helping Hands. Catherine McKenna, co-president, and the Rev. Dan Roushorne welcomed the group and President Joan Wagner opened with prayer. Then, Sheila Deneau led a hymn sing, accompanied by Marilyn Shaw.

Lois MacLachlan of the Ruth McLean Auxiliary of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Petrolia dedicated a Presbyterial Banner that was donated in memory of all Sarnia Presbyterian ladies who have gone home to be with the Lord. Suzanne Mater read the minutes of the 2008 Annual Meeting and Martha Ebert gave the treasurer's report.

Pastor Brian Barry, a potter, gave a demonstration, along with scripture, telling how God's fingerprints are all over His people. Rev. Barry's wife, Marion, sang lovely songs to go along with his sculpting.

Reports were approved and sent to Synodical, and the 10 Synodical delegates for Southwestern Ontario were announced, with 29 registered from Sarnia to attend the Synodical meetings in Leamington on April 21–22. Virginia Shaw gave the Nominating Committee report.

The Rev. Rebecca Roushorne-Lau gave a Bible study following the theme, Helping Hands, with illustrations from the biblical story The Good Samaritan. Each person contributed to the lunch with "helping hands."

Margaret MacDonald gave a book review, and the afternoon session began with another hymn sing. Dorothy Neal gave out the names of new Prayer Partners for each auxiliary (these are missionaries serving overseas).

Future outings include a summer outing to St. Jacob's and Cake by the Lake at Camp Kintail. After hearing the Rev. Theresa McDonald-Lee from Camp Kintail speak about the camp, a special offering was taken for the camp.

The Rev. Dan Roushorne installed

Paulette Pelletier presented her story of her mission trip last winter, with the Stephen Lewis Foundation to Africa at the Maitland WMS Presbyterial annual meeting, held January 26 at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church. A new executive was inducted at the same meeting.

the officer and Margaret Smith led the In Memoriam.

St. Andrew's WMS, of Corunna, led the closing worship.

-Beverly Cassel

East Toronto Presbyterial held their Annual Meeting on Saturday, February 28, at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Scarborough. The theme was Saved by Hope.

Following the registration and refreshments, we joined Katherine Allen and Anna Cook in a lively time of hymn singing. The president, Marjorie Ross, welcomed everyone, especially Carolyn Jones, Synodical president. Barbara Draffin, from St. Andrew's, used Romans 8:31–39 as the basis for the worship service.

Katherine Allen and Gladys Stover presented their adventures in Eastern Europe (along with 10 other women from across Canada, who participated in the WMS Mission Exposure Tour in October 2008). We met many people through their presentation and visited many places, hearing about the children's breakfast program, the Gypsy church and school, and their visits to an orphanage farm, to David and Anna Pandy-Szekeres' home, and also the home of Anna's parents. The offering was for school supplies for the schools of the Reformed Church of Sub-Carpathian Ukraine.

The various reports were presented and approved, and Carolyn Jones installed the officers for 2009–2010. After the benediction, we enjoyed a time of fellowship during a wonderful lasagne lunch prepared by the women of St. Andrew's. We all appreciated their hospitality and warm welcome in hosting us.

-Gladys Stover

Brockville Presbyterial WMS met in St. Paul's, Winchester, for their Spring Rally. On arrival, members and guests were served refreshments featuring a 120th Anniversary Cake for St. Paul's, donated by Doris Baker.

Bette Crerar and Helen McDonald from the Osgoode WMS led the devotions focusing on Grannies of the Bible. Helen gave a brief introduction to the Grannies to Grannies Campaign of the Stephen Lewis Foundation.

Margaret Reynolds introduced Mary MacMillan, the guest speaker. Mary, a member of the Morrisburg Amazing Grannies, a group that supports the Grannies to Grannies Campaign to bring aid to poverty-stricken countries suffering from the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The grannies use their passion and talents to bring hope. Mary, a retired nurse, volunteers here and in countries like Zambia to further the cause—education and medical aid are priorities. Other needs are tuition costs, classroom supplies, medication, clean water, and mosquito netting. Henry Donkersteeg thanked Mary for inspiring us to rise up and make a difference in our world.

In business, it was agreed to support the Gracefield Camp and Conference Centre and Canada Youth 2009 with

$150 each. Also, President Margaret Reynolds, presented a certificate to St. Paul's WMS on behalf of the Brockville Presbyterial. Donna Wilson, president, accepted on behalf of the faithful ones who upheld the mission of the church of Christ. Donna Wilson presented a Life Membership pin to Kathy Spruit on behalf of the St. Paul's group.

-Donna Wilson

Montreal Presbyterial held their 95th Annual Meeting at the Taiwanese Robert Campbell Presbyterian Church of Quebec on Saturday, March 14. Jean MacDonald gave greetings along with a short history of the church.

Rev. Paul Wu, the host minister, led devotions on our theme, We are in this Together, with Cynthia Ko providing music.

Genevieve Holding constituted the meeting and various reports were presented, received, and adopted. Peggy Wegrich led the meeting in an exercise break.

After lunch, the ladies of Côte De Neiges led us in another hymn sing. Anita Mack, regional staff member for the Presbyteries of Quebec and Montreal, led us in a program around our theme. We closed with the singing of, Love Divine, All Love Excelling.

-Lorna Smith

Local

St. John's, White Rock, WMS held their annual Mission Awareness Sunday on May 3. It was well received, with the women in the group leading the service flawlessly. Added to the worship were two community choirs, led by members of our church. The children's choir lifted our spirits with some African music, and the adult choir ended with "Music in the Air." We thank Donald and Marion Barclay MacKay for their informative message.

-Sheila Jakus

The **WMS of First Presbyterian Church, Port Colborne**, recently organized a successful fundraiser for Bricks for Jobat and School Supplies for Eastern Europe. On Mission Awareness Sunday, Mary Lou Johnston, from Dunnville, spoke of her recent trip to Eastern Europe. She spoke of how the WMS funds help gypsy children to attend school and have a better chance for a future. She also visited the model farm where agricultural skills are taught. It was very interesting to see how our efforts as a small community church do make a difference around the world.

-Peggy White

Correction:

The name Mrs. Emily Walker appeared in the May/June In Remembrance of *Glad Tidings*. It should have appeared as Miss Emily Walker, and can be found corrected in this month's In Remembrance. We apologize for this mistake.

Forward in Faith

Greetings from your new treasurer!

At our recent council meeting, I became the new treasurer of the WMS, taking over from Wilma Welsh. Wilma's knowledge of the many projects and the process of mission is tremendous, and she will be missed! I give my personal thanks to Wilma for all the work she has done and will continue to do for the WMS, and I wonder if I will ever be able to fill her shoes?

Yet, the deed is done and here I am. I hope that I will be able to keep you up to date on the many projects in which the WMS plays a part.

Thank you for the special funding that has been received for our special appeal launched in 2009—school supplies for Eastern Europe and bricks for Jobat. We have received approximately $21 000 for Eastern Europe and $72 000 for Jobat to date. As these projects have progressed, one challenge has come forth.

The funding of the schools in Eastern Europe is in crisis, and funds are so limited that teacher salaries and heating bills cannot be paid. So, in addition to the Together We Can project funds that will continue to be directed to school supplies, the WMS is making a one-time donation to assist the schools.

To update you on the Jobat project, construction will begin on the hostel in India when weather and funding permit. This is a larger endeavour than originally expected and we value your continued support of this important project.

We will continue to provide you with details on these projects. Thank you for encouraging individuals and congregations in making these projects a reality!

Your continued support of the WMS is much appreciated!

Janet Brewer, Treasurer

Janet Brewer is widely involved in the life of the WMS at several levels. She is treasurer of her own WMS group, President of West Toronto Presbyterial and area 2 secretary for the Synodical of CNOB. She is also the WMS representative on the Regional Consultative Committee. Her work with the Church doesn't stop with the WMS; she is the representative elder from her congregation and former Moderator for the Presbytery of West Toronto and former Moderator.

Married for almost 39 years to Walter, she is the mother of two grown children—another Walter and Elizabeth.

Janet hopes that through her job as treasurer, she "can be instrumental in helping the multiple projects currently funded by the WMS and perhaps assist in many new ones in the future" because mission is extremely important to her.

Circulation News

Katherine Allen

If you are the *Glad Tidings* secretary/contact person, watch your mailbox in August! This is when you will receive your *Glad Tidings* package, including your list of subscribers, and information on *Glad Tidings*. Look through your package as it will encourage you to contact your current subscribers and give you interesting ways to find new subscribers. Let's all work together to increase our circulation for 2010!

Here are a few points to help promote a magazine:

- Follow-up with subscribers (if possible) who cancelled the year before to find out if they would like to subscribe again.
- Focus on what a person will miss if they do not subscribe.
- Highlight an article and the mission's emphasis of the magazine in your church bulletin.

Glad Tidings is one of the many resources that keeps people informed of the mission work done within the church. Please remember that this magazine is for everyone and not just WMS members. If you have any questions regarding your subscription, please contact me.

PASS ME ALONG:

Sharing your *Glad Tidings* is a great way to promote the WMS, and to promote *Glad Tidings*. When you are finished with your copy, encourage …

Your minister to read, A Sense of Humour (p. 20)

A friend to read, Decluttering our Spiritual Lives (p. 12)

A WMS member to read, Opportunities Abound! (p. 22)

IN REMEMBRANCE

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Atwood ON

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St. Andrew's (Hespeler)
Presbyterian Women,
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Mrs. Elizabeth (Betty)
Threndyle
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MWS, Corunna ON

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Edith Vogt
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Mary, Martha & Gordon
WMS, Knox, Stratford ON

Mrs. Victoria Johann
St. Andrew's, Barrie ON

Names for In Remembrance can be sent by post or email. Please ensure names are typed or clearly written, and include your WMS group name (or congregation) and location.

The future is in your hands . . .

The gifts you plan for today can leave a lasting legacy for future generations and help shape the kind of church your children and grandchildren will inherit:

- A bequest can help ensure that your congregation will have a vital youth ministry for generations to come,
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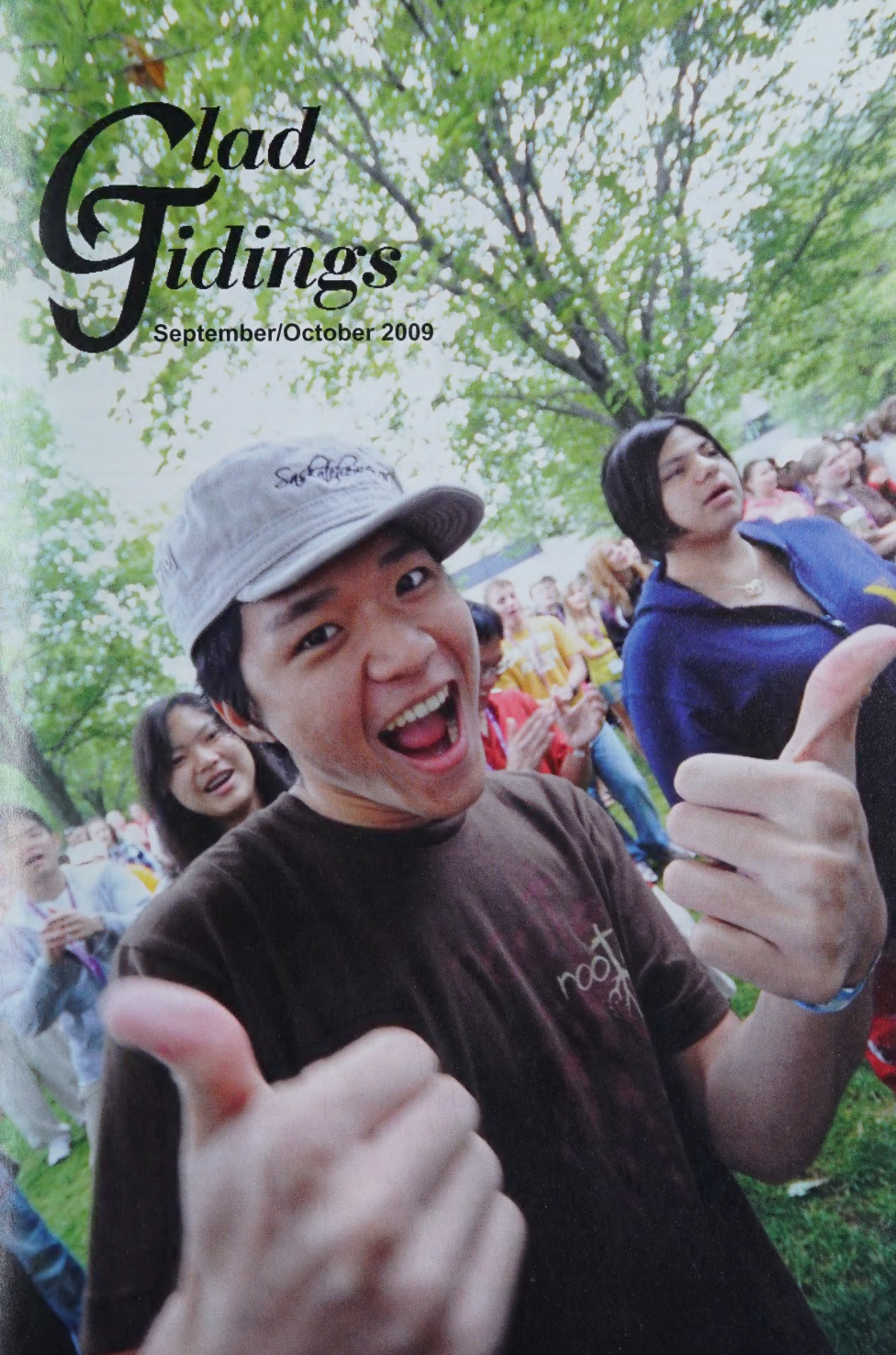
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May the Holy Spirit strengthen you
May you be rooted in the love of Christ
And may you be filled to the measure of all
the fullness of God, Amen

Based on Ephesians 3:14–21
From CY09 worship resources

Cover photo: Alex Luyckx, CY09 Stump

Glad Tidings

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Glad Tidings reports on aspects of the Women's Missionary Society on all levels.

Glad Tidings challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally, and internationally.

Glad Tidings through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired, and motivated to action.

GladTidings provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters, and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS or by the Editor.

Colleen Wood

From the Editor's Desk

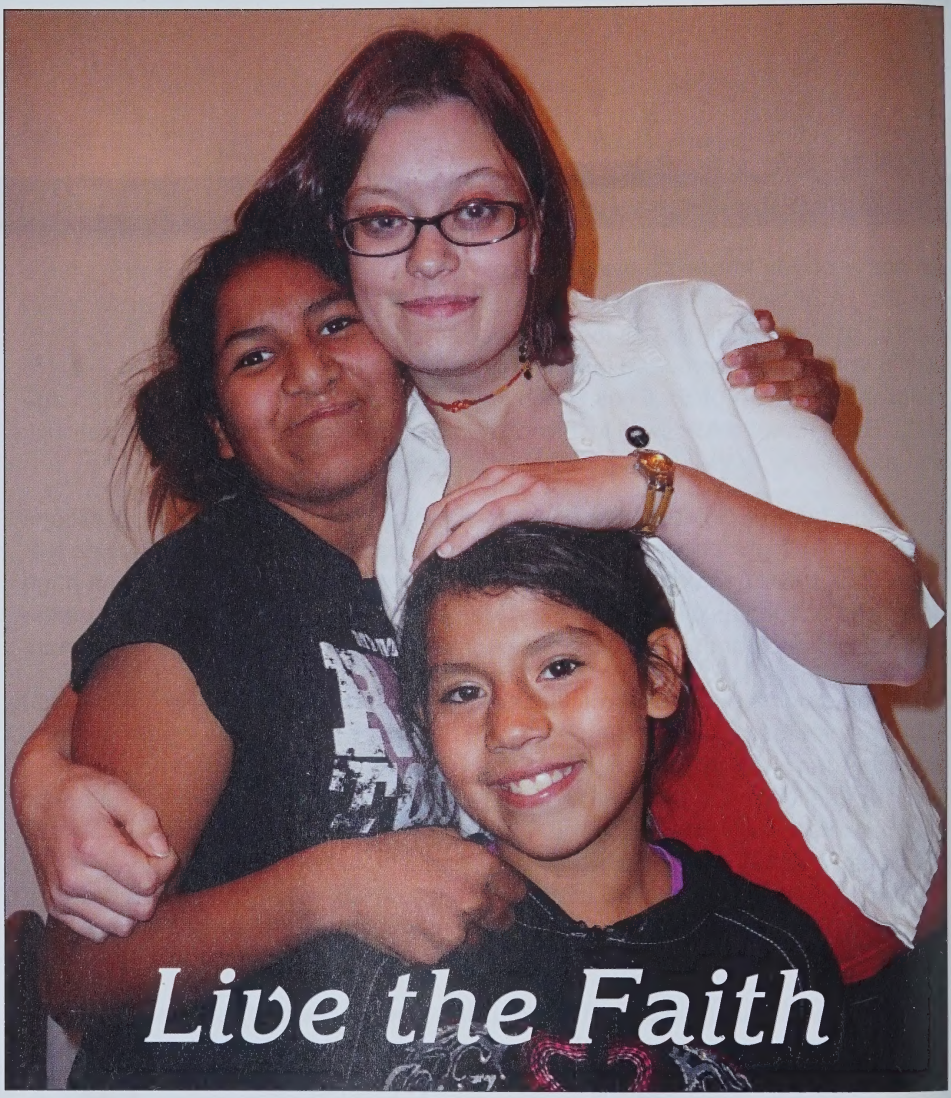
As many of you know, I have a passion for children and youth ministry. I have had the joy of being involved in children and youth ministry within The Presbyterian Church in Canada almost all my life. I began as a participant, began active leadership in my teen years, and later began my vocational ministry working with the children and youth of St. Giles Presbyterian Church in Ottawa at the young age of 23. Even now, I am actively involved in youth ministry as a parent of a 3-year-old, and as a leader in the youth ministry at St. Andrew's, Brampton.

I love the faith of children, the passion of junior high youth, and the questions brought on by high school youth. I know many of you and your WMS groups do too. The WMS, locally, regionally, and nationally, have been and continue to be huge doers and advocates of youth ministry. Many of you personally work to nurture the faith of children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, friends, and congregational youth.

I trust the articles this month will encourage you to continue that. No matter what your age, you can always be supportive of children and youth. Learn about them, listen to them, and give them your time. Share of your faith, the positive sides and the challenges, and listen to their faith story. Communicate with them—on youth events that are happening with The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Welcome their gifts, even if it might not be the way you would do things! Even consider inviting them to a special WMS event. If you are having a special mission speaker, a young person might love to come out and hear them, but they need to be invited to know that they are welcome!

In closing, with this being our Thanksgiving issue, I want to give thanks. I give thanks for all of you and the ministry you are involved in. I give thanks for the young people in our congregations who challenge us, encourage us, teach us, and minister to us. Finally, I give thanks for the opportunity to be your editor for the last year-and-a-half. This is my last editorial for a while as my second child is due in August so I will begin a year of maternity leave shortly. I leave you in the capable hands of the Rev. Heather Jones. Many of you will be familiar with Heather and will know of her passion for mission because of her time working in Malawi.

Blessings to you all and give thanks for God is good.



Live the Faith

by Allyssa de Bruijn

When I hear the phrase youth ministry, I initially think about ministering to youth. The Presbyterian Church in Canada has great opportunities for youth and young adults and there are plenty of people willing to offer their support. Whether it is Sunday evening youth group, or a fun-filled week at Canada Youth, Presbyterian youth are out there, learning, exploring, being active, and living the faith.

Participating in youth retreats and Bible studies encourages intellectual discussion and expands faith in deep ways. It helps you to use all the corners of your mind. It is also great to come together with people with common interests and learn from each other. Sharing ideas and having other people contemplate and add to them is another brilliant way to explore and wonder.

But another important aspect of youth ministry is ministry by youth. Youth in Mission, Presbyterian summer camps, Vacation Bible Schools, and many other excellent programs within our church give young people the opportunity to lead, share, gain new insights and experiences, and live the faith.

I have been fortunate enough to participate in many of these rewarding activities. I love to work with children, and enjoy leading at Vacation Bible School and being a counsellor in the outdoors at Camp Christopher. Both are great places to lead and care for God's creation. Listening to stories, asking questions, and playing in nature are wonderful ways to expand not only your own faith, but to help others discover their own unique view of faith. There is always something to explore and wonder about. Marvel and speculation are large parts of faith because they encourage growth—always wondering means always growing in God. What a blessing!

There are so many benefits to living the faith! Spending time with people, making new friends, discovering yourself, strolling along your faith journey, and living life in the glory of God are only some of the rewards of living a Christian life to the fullest. Becoming involved and sharing is a wonderful way to become self-aware, and letting other people into your life to share your experience only magnifies the effect. There are no inhibitions in a faith relationship, and you can truly know one another. After all, religion is among a person's most personal possessions and if one can be open about something so special, what have they got to hide about anything else? Ministry, in whatever sense of the word works best for the individual, leaves a sense of completeness and accomplishment which in turn, causes a residual "warm fuzzy" feeling. There's so much satisfaction in knowing that you've contributed and helped to benefit someone's life, in whatever magnitude. From having a faith conversation, to travelling overseas and volunteering with a local group, knowing that you have made a difference is always a comfort.

Ministry, in whatever sense of the word, works best for the individual, leaves a sense of completeness and accomplishment which in turn, causes a residual "warm fuzzy" feeling.

But with all of these benefits, why do numbers continue to decline in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, especially among the youth? And this

seems to be the norm not only in the Presbyterian population, but mainline Christianity in general. I can only speculate, but I suggest that the root of the problem is lack of information. There are so many opportunities for young people in our church that no one knows about. For example, at General Assembly this year, the Young Adult Representatives were talking with Reuben St. Louis, the Youth in Mission Coordinator for the PCC, and he informed us about a few international trips, all costs included, that nobody even applied for. None of us had ever heard of them and we were all certainly interested in hearing more about the opportunities, but because the word had not gotten out, the opportunity was missed.

And if that is what is happening inside the church, then it certainly must be like that for youth outside of the church. Perhaps all they need is to experience youth ministry, to feel that warm fuzzy feeling, to touch a life. Perhaps they just don't know what it's like and don't know how to ask. Perhaps they just need someone open whom they can trust to initiate faith talk. A common misconception among youth outside of the church is that they need to conform to the standards of the denomination, that their individuality and creativity will be stifled once they have joined, or that once you are in you can never get out. They will not start something they feel will automatically require a lifetime commitment. That puts a lot of pressure on young people, especially when they aren't completely decided on their faith! Youth need a place where they can be free to express themselves, to come with their questions, and to be shown that church isn't such a scary place, after all.

We, as good Presbyterians, value tradition and familiar customs, and it's worked in the past, but it's not what the youth of today need. To expand the church we love so much, we must be willing to branch out and try something new ourselves. Perhaps we all need to think about new ways to share our stories and discover ourselves and meander down a new path on our faith journey. Then we can bring new people to be a part of it. Perhaps the biggest challenge in the church today is us—God challenging us to dare to be different. So my challenge to you is to grow—explore, wonder, and live the faith!

Allyssa de Bruijn lives in rural Saskatchewan and worships with the blessed congregation of St. Andrew's, Saskatoon. She enjoys walking barefoot through the grass, spending time with people, smiling, and glorifying God.

Youth in Mission
Katrina Rebuilding

Youth in Mission (YIM) is a program that connects youth and young adults, ages 16–30, to mission opportunities in Canada and around the world. It provides opportunities for young volunteers to:

- give and receive through ministry.
- share in the work of Jesus Christ through action, lifestyle, and conversation.
- expand the experience of faith.
- recognize and celebrate human worth and dignity.

Youth in Mission's 2009 experiences included:

- providing leadership for a three-week travelling vacation Bible school in Peace River Presbytery, Alberta
- providing leadership for a First Nations day camp in Mistawasis, Saskatchewan
- the Canada Youth 2009 Mission Branch where participants increased their awareness of the mission work of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and offered their gifts of services to various work projects in the St. Catharines area.

YIM is supported by donations to Presbyterians Sharing. Information about YIM's 2010 mission opportunities can be found at www.presbyterian.ca/yim.

Here is one of the many life-changing YIM stories from one of this summer's participants.

Katrina Rebuilding
by Rachel Turner

When I first decided to go on this trip, to be honest, I felt like I was at the end of my personal rope. University wasn't where I wanted to be and I was very close to dropping out. I had just lost my job thanks to the recession. My family was having a variety of discouraging events piling up all at once. And amidst it all, I was feeling extremely overwhelmed, depressed, and self-centred. I knew that's not where God wanted me to stay. So rooting through a pile of mission papers, the YIM Katrina Rebuilding Trip seemed like a good first step in mission; helping people who had experienced real tangible loss.

By the time the trip came around, I still found that I couldn't escape the wall that was coming between me and others. Regardless of my personal state, I forced myself to listen to others' stories and take every opportunity I could to experience something new (learning to Cajun dance, feeding alligators, trying gumbo, and even using a power tool!). Still, God had a plan—he quickly showed me that I was getting it all wrong. I couldn't conjure up love for

others within myself. I needed to learn where the source of love was.

I learned this powerful lesson from my teammates as well as the locals I met down there. Through everything in their personal lives, they held strong to each other and to their faith in God. One family in particular lost their home three times—to Katrina, Gustav, and Ike. The family struggles with multiple sclerosis, yet not once did they complain or hesitate to share their stories or their meals with us. I have never met a group of people with kinder, gentler hearts. This definitely was the love of God in action. I felt unworthy, and honestly was not prepared to accept their love, but they chipped away at the wall I had around my heart and forced their way in. I will never forget them.

God also showed me I had a lot to learn about strength and perseverance. The work project we were assigned to involved working with a woman who needed to be in her house by June 1 when her Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) trailer would be taken away. She also had to move in her brother whom she takes care of. We were the last group to help her prepare her house before June 1 and there were only five of us to get it ready for her to move in. It was here I thought, "How can I really be a help? I have no hands on construction skills." But would 'ya' know it, there were tons of cleaning to

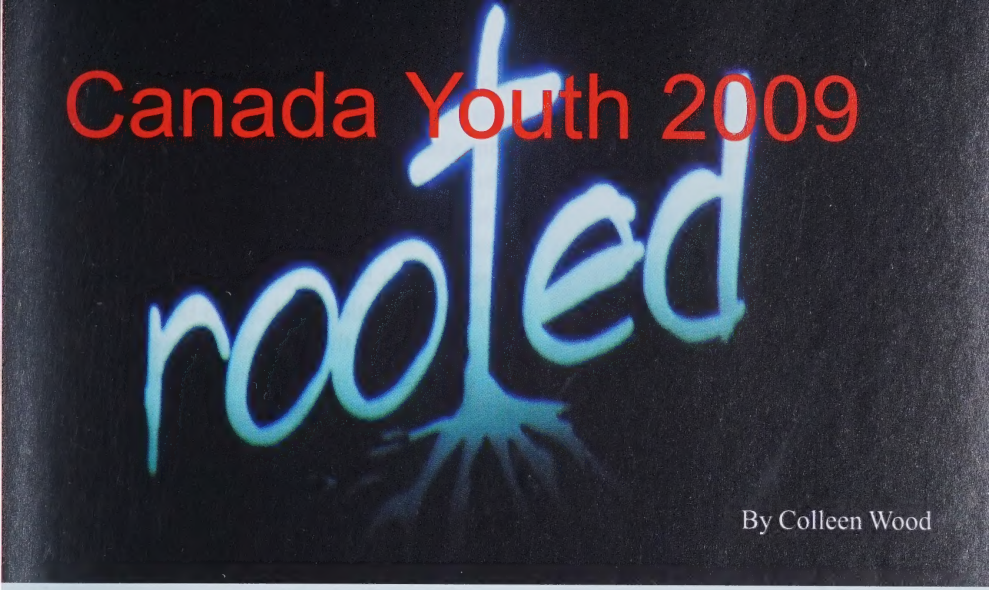
be done and I am definitely keen on making everything sparkle. I did learn a few construction skills that week, but more than that, I learned that God can use even the strangest gifts (mopping and dishwashing) to bring things together for those who love Him. He has given us each gifts and strengths we may not consider until the time comes when we are called to God's service. With that being said, we had the house ready and we had moved this women in by May 29. Praise God! We were hot, we were exhausted, but we were victorious!

By the end of that week our little group felt like a little family. I could be completely open with them, and there were a few emotional moments (and many hilarious ones, too). It's amazing how working on a common goal can bring people together despite differences in personalities and backgrounds. I would encourage anyone struggling with feelings of a lack of purpose or direction to take part in a mission trip. You may find, as I did, that in the end it has nothing really to do with you. To be liberated from your own life and to show others love and compassion is such a gift. You will touch someone's life, and they may happen to completely reshape yours in the process. Out of personal chaos, there is hope in Jesus.

Matthew 10:39 (NIV) Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

Rachel Turner is 20 years old and a member of Trinity Community Presbyterian Church in London, Ontario.

Canada Youth 2009



By Colleen Wood

As I write this, I can hardly believe that this is the Fourth National Youth Conference of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Canada Youth 2000 was planned as a one-time event to celebrate the Flames Year of Children, Youth, and Young Adults. Through the prayer, work, and advocacy of many, this first event became a reality, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Now, here I am at my fourth Canada Youth event, and although sadly I am only here for a day, I am still moved by the energy of the young people, and feel the excitement in the air. Canada Youth is unique in many ways, but likely the most profound is that it is three conferences in one! There are three branches—the Conference Branch, the Mission Branch, and the Youth Ministry Branch. Each unique branch shares the common theme, Rooted.

The Conference Branch is for high-school students to laugh, play, worship, and celebrate together in a unified yet diverse community of faith. Their days are spent in small groups where each day they play, reflect, pray, and explore the theme scriptures and what it means to be Rooted. Daily activities also include a variety of sports and games, art and music, and spiritual and Biblical workshops.

The Mission Branch is for young adults ages 18–25. Each day they explore different areas of service and action. They partner with various ministries in the St. Catharines area as they participate in various work projects. The Mission Branch provides a small, Christ-centred community united in serving and living out Christ's call of discipleship.

Finally, the Youth Ministry Branch is for youth leaders. They will become

Photo: Alex Luyckx

Photo: Elaine Anderson

Photo: Alex Luyckx

more firmly rooted in their faith, growing more strongly in Christian maturity. From being inspired by two amazing key lecturers, Andrew Root and Mark Yaconelli, to discovering practical tools for youth ministry in their small groups, they will be inspired and equipped for their current ministry with young people.

For many the week starts before they even set their feet on the grounds of Brock University in St. Catharines. Some of the young people are involved in planning the event, but many more are engaged as they fundraise to attend. Individuals, congregations, the local and national WMS, presbyteries, synods, and the national church all help young people through their prayers and financial support. For many, the fundraising is part of the fun as they hold breakfasts, dinners, talent nights, and auctions. For others, the excitement begins as they journey to the event. Many travel to the event on buses (with some trips lasting over 20 hours), others make their way in mini vans, and still others travel by air.

Once they arrive, they are warmly welcomed and the excitement level builds even more. Many just enjoyed this time as they renewed old friendships, or met new friends. Others participated in The Amazing Race, a scavenger hunt to familize everyone with the campus. Their week was beginning …

For many, the highlight of each day, and of the week, would be evening worship. Before the band even takes the stage, the excitement is present as flashing lights, multiple LCD projectors, and smoke machines set the stage. Like worship in many of our congregations there is music, prayers, scripture, communion, and preaching. But, add to that a drama team, video clips, a full worship band, international music and guests, liturgical movement, and

large visuals, some even including art from the event. The strongest message from worship was one of love. The Rev. Sarah Travis reminded us that there is nothing we can do to make God love us more, and that there is nothing we can do that will make God love us less! What an amazing message for all of us—the reminder that God's love is unconditional, and that we have nothing to prove!

For those who find worship too big or loud for connecting with God, the Spirit Grove was a great alternative. Open all week, this spirituality centre allowed young people to find quiet. The centre was off the beaten path and had a gorgeous view of a small pond and waterfall. There were areas to create, with clay, watercolours, and even a sand box. There were places to reflect and pray with books for study, and cards to record a prayer to tie to a prayer tree. There was music for reflection, and bread to savour. There was also a labyrinth allowing for a contemplative prayer walk.

Small groups are also another place where young people connect with God. For the conference branch, small groups are almost like home. It is a place where they gather daily to check in and develop relationships. It is a place where the young people can really explore the scriptures, and also explore Christian community. They can ask questions and discuss their experience of worship. Whether they were creating a walking tree, or participating in team building activities, the scripture was always close by.

Recreation, or re-creation, is also an important part of Canada Youth. It allows each person to celebrate who they are as God's child—the way they move and interact with creation and with one another. Recreation comes in many forms of which The Stump is one of them. It is a meeting place where young people interact with

Photo: Colleen Wood

May the Holy Spirit
strengthen you
May you be rooted in the
love of Christ
And may you be filled to
the measure of all the
fullness of God, Amen

Based on Ephesians 3:14–21
From CY09 worship resources

Photo: Elaine Anderson

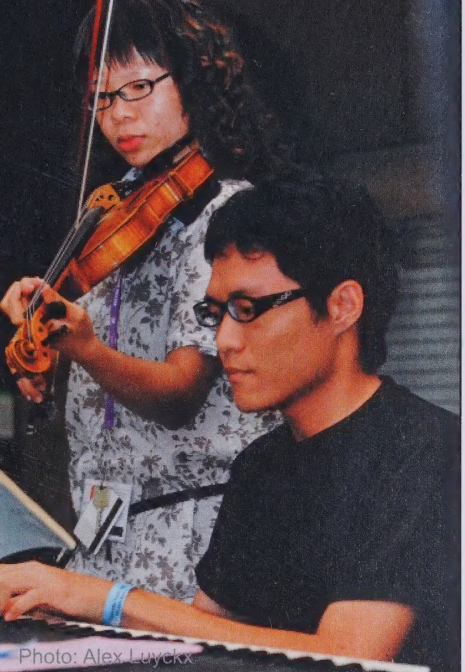


Photo: Alex Luyckx

Photo: Heather Jones

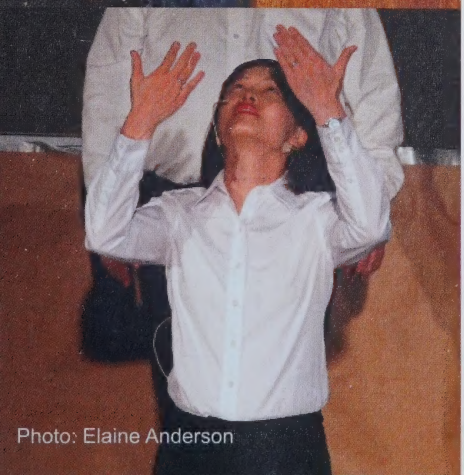


Photo: Elaine Anderson

one another through movement known as Holy Motion. Its goal is to build community and rejuvenate! Recreation also saw the young people entertained by juggler and comedian Bob Cates. For those who were maybe feeling a little homesick, synod gatherings allowed for them to connect with others from their area for recreation. One synod made their own ice cream, another had a kitchen party, and another celebrated Christmas in July.

Although the youth ministry branch and mission branches participate in worship and recreation with the entire conference, they also have their own activities. The mission track participate in hands-on mission. They worked at a low-income housing cooperative, and built gardens; they worked also at the YWCA and Bethlehem House. They worked hard and made a difference. The youth ministry branch thought hard and reflected on how they will make a difference in the lives of young people. These youth leaders, a combination of new and old youth leaders, volunteer and paid, learned more about their ministry with youth, and their own spiritual journeys.

For most, this is a life changing event—a highlight of their year, and for some, a highlight of their lives. To come together with so many Presbyterians from across the country is amazing. They share faith, friendship, challenges, hopes, and dreams. Now that it is September, the young people are back into their regular routines. They are separated from the community of Canada Youth and the memories are beginning to fade. But you, as individuals, as WMS members, as family members, or friends, can help our young people learn from and use their experience.

Here are a few ways you can keep the experience of CY alive:

- Talk to a CY participant. Ask them about their experience. What was their favourite part of the experience? What was the one thing they learned at the event?
- Invite them to speak about their experience. Invite them share at a WMS meeting, or during a worship service. If you had a large group attend from your congregation, consider having them host an entire worship service. They can find resources at the Canada Youth website to assist them (www.canadayouth.ca)
- Ask to see their pictures and souvenirs from the event. If you have a coffee time, perhaps they can set up a Canada Youth display to share their experience visually.
- Let them write about the experience in your bulletin or church newsletter.
- Involve them in congregational leadership. Those in all three branches will have learned new leadership skills at the event. Look for ways in which they can share these new skills in the life of the church.
- Connect them with other young people's events. Contact your regional staff and ask them what youth gatherings are happening for young people. Most synods have some regional gatherings for youth.
- Provide pastoral care. Events such as this can open up many spiritual questions for your young people. Work them as they explore these.
- Learn more about the event. Even if you didn't have young people attend, you can learn more about the event. Invite a young person from the area to share with you. Visit The Presbyterian Record website to read stories or see pictures from the young people (www.presbyterianrecord.ca).

The Underground

by Alexis McKeown

A life-size board game, various displays, a simulated local grocery store highlighting the 100-mile diet, petition campaigns, photo slideshows, knitters' corner, popcorn and coffee café, graffiti wall, stage entertainment, Internet access, letter writing station, and … All this would make for a very busy week. Now imagine it all happening at the same time, in the same room. Done? Well, now you have an idea of what The Underground at Canada Youth 2009 (CY09) was like. The louder the music, the busier the room, and the more popular we become.

The Underground was a new resource for CY09 sponsored by the WMS. It offered a place for participants in the conference to see how faith can inspire actions that serve the world. At every lunch and dinner, The Underground opened giving everyone, regardless of age, a place to see stage presentations, screen offerings, information booths, and activity centres. There was information to share, skills to teach, and

places for participants to express their creativity and their opinions.

Tuesday was the official opening of The Underground and it opened with a bang. Everyone wanted to see what the hype was about. At lunch, five mimes wandered through the crowd sharing their actions with the participants. Once the room had settled some ACTS (Acclaiming Christ Through Stage), a group of young people who tell of the Good News through the universal language of dramatic arts, performed four short mimes. ACTS continued to thrill their audience during the dinner period.

Another highlight on stage was the open mic. Participants came with instruments, used the provided keyboard, sang, shared philosophy, as well as other gifts. The talent was great and the audience extremely supportive. The range of music and acts created a great atmosphere. The lunch open mic was so successful, we hosted it once again through dinner. The international youth from Taiwan also entertained the audience with some facts on Taiwan, a duet on the violin and keyboard, a trivia game, and taught everyone some Aboriginal dance moves. The floor and walls of The Underground were swaying in all directions.

Another stage presentation included trivia games from Presbyterian World Service & Development testing participants' knowledge of international human rights, justice, and development issues. On Friday, various leaders from CY09 were also given the opportunity to share their thoughts on Christian vocation and their experience of calling.

Besides the stage, which was our biggest draw, we had photos of camps from across Canada, a video from the Past Moderator of General Assembly, Rev. Cheol Soon Park, talking about the Kyoto campaign, and a slideshow of CY09 pictures from the week. To add to the organized chaos, there were also activities around the room. The Justice Game, which challenged players' knowledge of Canadian and International justice issues, including refugees, the Church and Canadian Aboriginals, and the environment, was a huge success. Teams of 4–8 struggled with prison, refugee camps, and fate cards. The players left with a few more justice issues to ponder. There was also a list of our overseas missionaries with profiles so that messages could be sent from CY09.

The Local Flavour, a simulated general store, let participants guess what is grown locally around their home. It was amazing how many people got perfect scores. I'm not sure if it was the chocolate loonies that made this booth such a success or if it is people's general interest in the 100-mile diet. I was also surprised by the popularity of our learn-to-knit activity. All ages and all knitting levels came to start a washcloth for camps or a pneumonia vest for our overseas partners. We even had a few leaders/volunteers come almost every lunch to work on their project.

For the most part, The Underground was a place for participants to take in as much or as little as they wanted. People were able to come and go as they pleased, enjoying the entertainment or the activities and displays around the room. It was a place to be extremely hands-on and active or to take time to observe and enjoy what others were doing.

I Promise

by Laura Duggan

I promise. It is a phrase that I connect strongly with my childhood. I promised my parents that my room would be cleaned up. I promised to get along with my brother and to listen to the babysitter. I made promises to my friends to be at places, to do things together, and to keep their secrets. Each week, I recited my Brownie promise.

That is not to say that I haven't made promises as an adult—there have been many, some of them very important. One day, I stood at the front of a church and promised to love my husband. Two other days, my husband and I stood at the front of a church and promised to raise our children in the Christian faith. We listened, too, as the people of the congregation made promises—promises to help us and support us in teaching our children about God and to help nurture their faith. This is a promise made to each child, each family, by the people of the congregation during the Sacrament of Baptism. This is another of the important promises I have made as an adult.

It is said that as we grow, we make the type of promises that we are able to honour. These grown-up promises are a little more complex than the straight forward ones of childhood. A great deal more depends on them and a great deal more is involved in keeping them. They require intentional ongoing choices and dedication. They require relationships and responses to changing needs and circumstances. The promises made to a child and his or her family during baptism require the care of the faith community.

The challenge, then, may be in how we keep that promise. How do we nurture children in their faith? Each congregation, like each family, will have a different approach arising out of their unique situation and the needs of the child, or children, they are seeking to support. What follows are a few suggestions that have been tried in different churches.

At Church

- **Create a welcoming atmosphere for children and their families in worship.**

  You might consider setting out packages of crayons along with children's bulletins, or colouring pages, relating to the scriptures for the day. You might offer "Pew Pals" (soft, washable toys) for young children to cuddle and care for during worship.

- **Offer nursery care and a church school program.**

  There are wonderful curricula available for all ages and sizes of church schools. The Young Children in Worship program offers a worship experience for children. A lectionary-based curriculum, in a congregation that follows the lectionary in worship, offers an opportunity for children and their parents to learn about the same scripture passages each week.

- **Give a Bible or a Bible storybook to children as a gift from the congregation.**

  One congregation gives a Bible each year to children graduating from the Grade Four church school class. Each child, then, has a Bible of his/her own and anticipation is built in the younger children for their turn to receive the gift. Story Bibles could also be given at baptism.

- **Engage children and young people in the life of the congregation.**

  Help them offer and explore their gifts and talents. They could be invited to read scripture, help greet and usher, or share a piece of music with the congregation.

  Offer a children's lending library. There are many resources available through The Book Room or your local Christian bookstore. (Be sure to check the type of illustrations and the message of the books to ensure that they fit with the vision of your congregation.)

- **Offer ideas and resources for families to use at home.**

  Some curricula provide "take-home" pages as a follow-up to the weekly lesson. There are also many resources available on The Presbyterian Church in Canada website.

- **Host a mid-week group, or Vacation Bible School for children.**

I Promise

I Promise

Through Church

- **Send a child, or children, to camp.**
  Send a young person to a youth conference like Canada Youth, or on a Youth in Mission trip. A group in the church, or the congregation as a whole, could provide sponsorship. The person sponsored could be invited to share their experiences during worship or in the church newsletter.
- **Host a parent/adult-child Spirituality retreat.**
  This could be a day away, or a weekend together. It provides an opportunity for families to be together, away from their regular routine, and explore their faith.

At Home

- **Read a story Bible and wonder about the character, or events, together.**
  One busy family kept a story book at the kitchen table and read a section each evening during dessert.
- **Take turns asking the blessing for the meal.**
- **Pray together.**
  Begin the day by giving thanks for the wonder and possibility of each new day. End each day by thinking about the events of the day and how God has been with you; remember the people in your life; things that made you happy; things that made you sad; or what you were sorry about. Take some time to learn about people who live in different places and pray for them.
- **Go on a wonder-walk and explore creation together.**
- **Bake some cookies, or make a card.**
  Give them to someone who needs a smile.

Laura Duggan is currently serving as Associate Minister in a team ministry with the Rev. John Henderson at St. Andrew's, Newmarket. In the congregation, and at home with her three small children, she is always looking for new and exciting ways to nurture faith.

Invite Them In

by Spencer Edwards

I have been working with young people in The Presbyterian Church in Canada for many years (perhaps more than I care to admit). Long enough that the young people I began working with all those years ago are not that young anymore. Just yesterday I had the honour of participating in the service of ordination to the Ministry of Word and Sacraments for a woman I have known since she was a young teen. I wish I could say that all the young people I have known are still connected to the church. Many are. They are faithful and gifted folk—leaders in youth ministry, camp directors and staff, elders, ministers, and others pursuing their Christian vocation in every sphere imaginable. However, I am certain that many more are no longer participating in a faith community of any kind.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada, along with all the mainline churches, is facing the reality that we have a hard time hanging on to 'our' youth. A recent article in *Maclean*'s magazine entitled, *Youth Survey: Teens Lose Faith in Droves*, spotlighted the research of Reginald Bibby, the University of Lethbridge sociologist who has been surveying Canadian young people about their religious beliefs (and many other things) for more than 25 years. His latest research is indicating that teens identifying themselves as Protestant Christians have reached a new low of 13%. In 1984 the percentage was 35.

In the United States, leaders in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Southern Baptist churches came together to explore the issue of 'faith drift' in the young people of their respective traditions. This 'faith drift' refers to those young people who were once active in their faith communities and later cease to participate. Their research indicated that they were 'losing' up to 75% of their previously involved young people by age 21. Further, they identified that only about 10% of those that continued in their faith communities were active in the life and mission of the church.

This led them to ask: Why did they stay? What makes the difference for these young people? To find the answer to these questions, these churches undertook to ask those that stayed about their faith journeys. The interviewers found that there were some common threads in the lives of young people who never stopped being involved with a faith community. These common threads, or Faith Factors, are:

1. They belong to a family who integrated faith into their family identity and practice. *This is one of the top factors that emerge ... family and family practices matter!*
2. They have three or more adult mentors of vital faith. *They reported having teachers, coaches, employers, and congregation members who modelled faith.*
3. They have worked with a team serving other people, in the name of Christ. *For many this was a mission trip, working at camp, or teaching Sunday school.*
4. They were apprenticed early into leadership in their church. *From the age of ten, their leadership has been invited by the church in many ways.*
5. They have participated in a meaningful church experience in which youth are valued. *They experienced quality relationships, interesting preaching, engaging music and worship, and a feeling that everyone is welcome.*
6. They have been involved in an engaging senior high and young adult ministry. *They reported having quality relationships with young people and adults, meaningful bible studies, servanthood activities, worship activities, and opportunities to be in prayer for one another. Youth ministry, campus ministry, and young adult ministry made a difference in the lives of these young people.*
7. They have engaging Christian friends. *The power of Christian friendships is reported over and over and over again.*
8. They have experienced support from the Christian community during a personal crisis. *They felt that they were not alone ... they felt embraced.*

As I have reflected on these findings from the US, I wondered if these would hold true for us. So, I thought of my newly ordained friend, and the others I know who have stayed connected and active in the Church, and I looked to see if these faith factors were present in their lives. Over and over, the answer is a clear 'yes'. Certainly not a scientific study, but it's enough to convince me that these factors can be useful to help us focus our efforts to nurture our young people in the life of faith.

So, as WMS groups, parents, grandparents, extended family members, church leaders, and fellow congregants, what are some things we can do to ensure these factors are present for our youth?

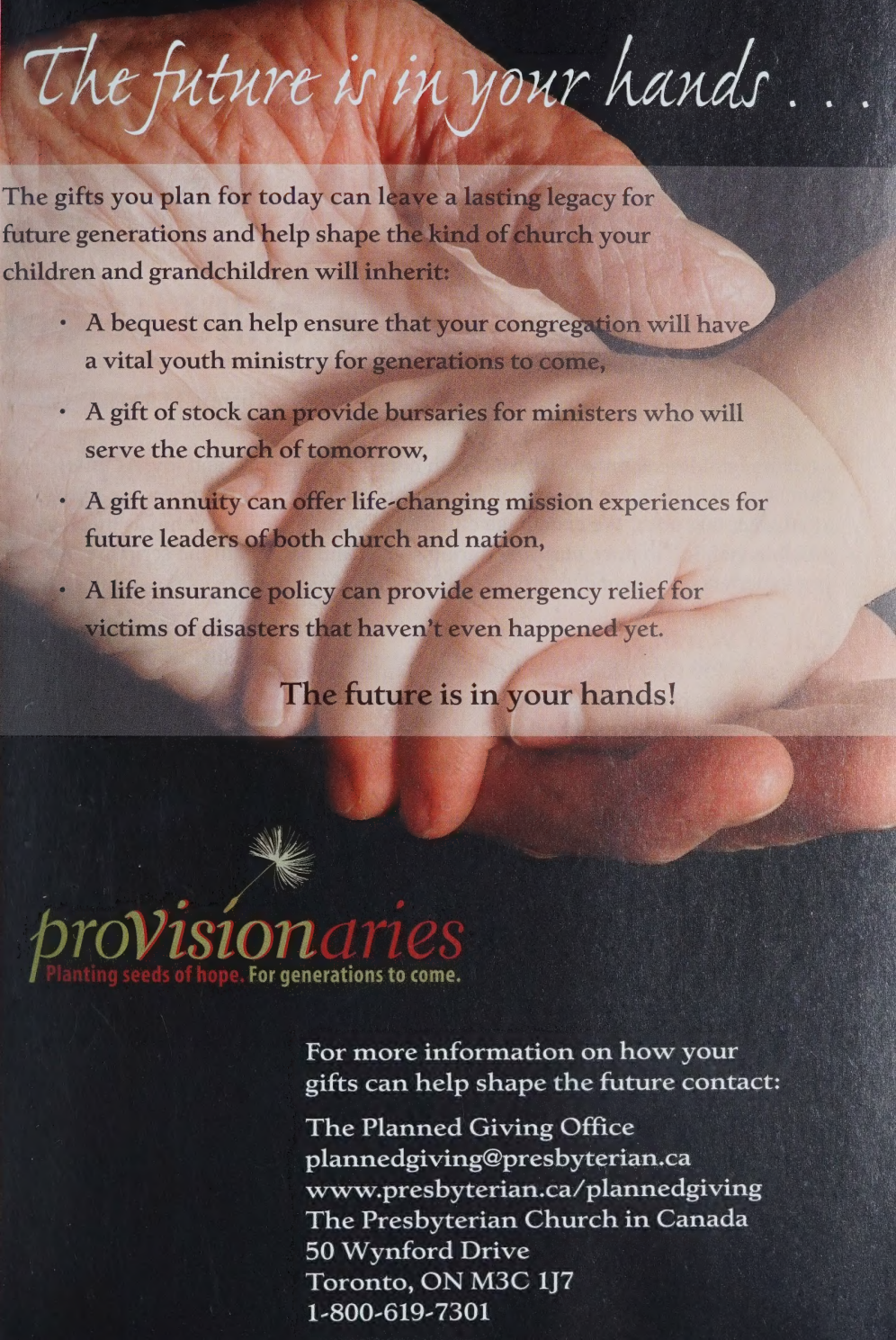
1. Make opportunities to talk about and practise faith in your family. Find a good book of family devotions and make a point of reading and discussing it together. Serve others as a family. Create a ritual that your family can practise (a mealtime grace, or a bedtime blessing).

   Support families in your congregation. Give them the tools they need to learn and grow in faith as families (a book of devotions,

distribute some graces they could use at mealtimes, or prepare an Advent liturgy for families).

2. Talk to the young people in your congregation (and anywhere else you encounter them). Get to know their names. Offer whatever gift you have to them. I have vivid and fond memories of the wonderful grandmotherly and grandfatherly folks who came to cook at the youth retreats I attended. They spoiled us rotten and we got to know them as we prepared the meals and created dishes side by side. I'll never forget them and what they taught me from their lifetimes of experience living as Christians!
3. Invite young people to serve others. There are few things in a young person's life of discipleship as significant as the experience of service. I have known many young people who were transformed by the experience of a mission trip (check out what's available through the PCC's Youth in Mission program).
4. Notice the gifts of the children and youth in your congregation. Make opportunities for them to exercise those gifts and become part of the life and work of the church.
5. Make your church a welcoming place for kids. Know their names and invite their participation. Look for ways to worship that will engage them. Let them know that they belong.
6. Make sure that your ministry with kids doesn't end with their 'graduation' from church school in Grade 6. Finds ways to do youth ministry that 'fit' for your congregation ... youth group is not the only way to do youth ministry! Pass along information about regional youth events (like PYPS or similar groups), teen weeks at camp, or Canada Youth. Encourage and enable them (financially and in other ways) to attend.
7. By helping them to attend youth events, you'll create the opportunity for them to meet the Christian friends they need.
8. By knowing them you will be aware of their hurts and will be able to support them. I am aware of several congregations who appointed elders with 'districts' made up of the younger members of the congregation. These elders then have time to meet with these young people individually and to care for them.

There is no secret formula for keeping our young people. The 'faith factors' research merely reminds us that by being intentional and by forming relationships with young people we can make a difference in their lives of faith. Not surprising, since the heart of this faith is not about anything other than our relationship with God—the God who loves you, me, and these young. They are waiting to experience this relationship. Invite them in.



The gifts you plan for today can leave a lasting legacy for future generations and help shape the kind of church your children and grandchildren will inherit:

- A bequest can help ensure that your congregation will have a vital youth ministry for generations to come,
- A gift of stock can provide bursaries for ministers who will serve the church of tomorrow,
- A gift annuity can offer life-changing mission experiences for future leaders of both church and nation,
- A life insurance policy can provide emergency relief for victims of disasters that haven't even happened yet.

The future is in your hands!

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For more information on how your gifts can help shape the future contact:

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Thank You, God!

Offering Thanks as a Child of God

by Rev. Theresa McDonald-Lee

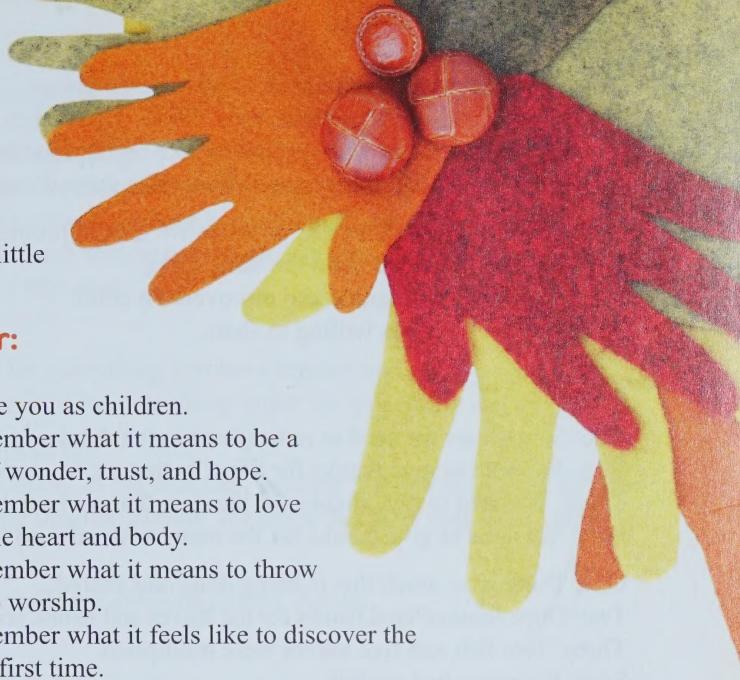
At camp, children approach worship with honesty, simplicity, and joy. At times, there is such truth in the prayers of the children that the staff members are moved to laughter and tears. We encourage children to participate in worship as much as possible, helping to pray, clapping during songs, and acting out the scripture. As you experience this worship service, feel free to be as childlike as possible!

Call to Worship:

Psalm 150 (from *Everyday Psalms* by James Taylor)

God has given us a glorious playground;
Let us have fun together!
Climb to the top of the stairs
With your heart in your mouth;
Slide down the shiny slope with shrieks of glee.
Ride the swings higher and higher
Until you can reach out and touch the sky;
Swirl around on the merry-go-round
Until your head swims.
Build dream castles in the sandbox;
Bounce on the trampoline
And soar above your troubles.
Chase your friends in a game of tag;
Throw your arms around everyone in a giant hug.

Let our games, our imaginings, our activities,
Announce to all that this is God's playground.
God gave it to us to enjoy together.
Come! Praise God in God's playground!



Hymn: 441 Can a little child like me

Opening Prayer:

Dear God,
We come before you as children.
Help us to remember what it means to be a child—full of wonder, trust, and hope.
Help us to remember what it means to love with our whole heart and body.
Help us to remember what it means to throw ourselves into worship.
Help us to remember what it feels like to discover the world for the first time.
Help us to remember how a child gives thanks.
May we feel and know your presence as we worship together. Amen.

Words of Assurance:

Jesus called the little children to his side and called them blessed.
How fortunate are we that each of us is a child of God—loved, forgiven, and blessed!
Thanks be to God!

Read: John 6:1–7

One: Sometimes it feels like there is never enough ...
Two: not enough money ...
Three: not enough time ...
Four: never enough volunteers ...

One: There is so much we want to do for God, but we start to run out of energy and joy and determination.
Two: The disciples felt the same way.
Three: They could only see the problem.
Four: They could only see the barriers in their way.

Read: John 6:8–9

One: Sometimes we need to look to unexpected places ...
Two: a bit of money slipped to us by a church friend when it is needed most ...
Three: a retired couple who decides to take on the food bank at church ...
Four: nurses who volunteer their skills to take care of campers.

One: There is so much we can do when we look at problems with new eyes.
Two: The disciples had to do the same thing.
Three: They looked around and discovered a child.
Four: A child who was willing to share.

Read: John 6:10–11

One: Sometimes we need to remember to give thanks.
Two: We need to give thanks for the gifts that we have received.
Three: We need to give thanks for the time that we have been given.
Four: We need to give thanks for the many who offer so freely of their time.

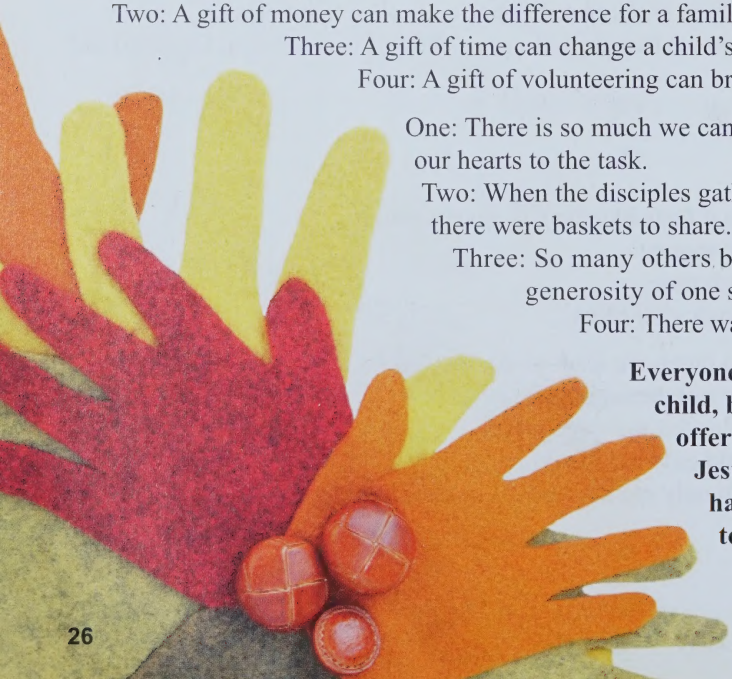
One: There is so much that is being done and shared.
Two: Once Jesus offered thanks for the loaves and fishes, something new happened.
Three: Two fish and five loaves were multiplied.
Four: Everyone had enough.

Read: John 6:12–13

One: Sometimes we need to share from our abundance.
Two: A gift of money can make the difference for a family.
Three: A gift of time can change a child's life.
Four: A gift of volunteering can bring fulfillment.

One: There is so much we can change when we set our hearts to the task.
Two: When the disciples gathered the leftovers, there were baskets to share.
Three: So many others benefited from the generosity of one small boy.
Four: There was enough to share.

Everyone: From the gift of a child, bread and fish were offered. From the gift of Jesus, all were fed and had enough. Thanks be to God!



Hymn: 802 For the fruits of all creation

Prayers of Thanksgiving:

(We try to get campers to participate in prayers and this is one of the prayers where campers have a chance to share in community prayer. This is an alphabet prayer and each participant will be encouraged to give thanks for items that start with each letter of the alphabet.)

Dear God,
We are thankful for everything you have created and given to us.
Today we are thankful for everything under the sun and in the alphabet.

A ... B ... C ... and so on.
(Go through the letters of the alphabet, pausing. Participants can then offer thanks, by naming them or silently, for items that start with each letter of the alphabet.)

For each of your gifts we give you thanks, Amen.

Offering:

For the offering, take pre-cut loaves and fishes from construction paper and pass them out to each participant. On the paper, draw a picture of something you are willing to offer to God in the coming months—something that you are able to share from your abundance. Along with this, you can also collect your WMS offerings if you choose.

Offering prayer:

God of abundance, you provide for us in abundance. May our offerings of time and money be multiplied as the loaves and fishes were multiplied and may they be used to further your Kingdom. Amen.

Hymn: 807 We plough the fields and scatter

Blessing & Sending Forth:

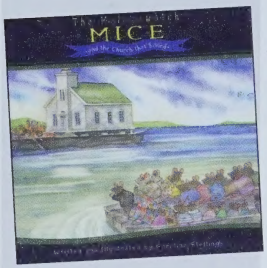
May we be like little children—ready to share what we have been given.
May we be like Jesus—ready to offer thanks for each gift.
May we be like the disciples—ready to open our eyes to see what is in front of us.

The Rev. Theresa McDonald-Lee is the Director of Camp Kintail, Goderich, and a regional staff person for the Synod/Synodical of Southwestern Ontario. She and her husband Johnathon are busy with Ella (3), Lucy (3), and Anna (1).

Book Reviews

For Children:

***The Malagawatch Mice and the Church That Sailed* by Caroline Stellings**



We sometimes joke about our Scottish heritage. Sometimes we talk about it with scorn or sarcasm in our voices. Often we celebrate it. This book can add to those celebrations.

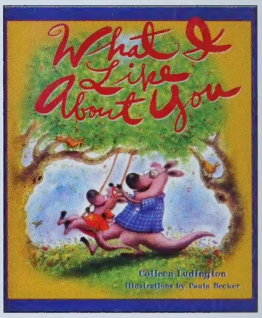
The author was moved to write this story when Malagawatch Church was moved across Cape Breton Island's Bras d'Or from Malagawatch to Iona in 2003. The church was built as a Presbyterian Church in 1874 to serve the areas which are primarily Gaelic. In 1925, the church became a part of the United Church. Eventually, with dwindling numbers, the church was relocated to the Highland Village Museum in Iona, but that left Caroline Stellings wondering, "What about the church mice?"

This is a delightful tale of the mice of Malagawatch Church and their journey to protect their heritage and to be faithful to their way of life. The beautiful watercolour illustrations seem to lull the reader into a simpler time and place. And the delightful ending will have you rejoicing with the faithful church mice of Malagawatch Church.

***What I Like About You* by Colleen Ludington; illustrated by Paula Becker**

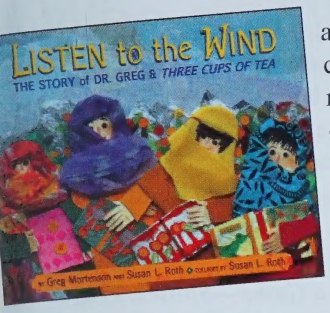
This is a delightful book about how each of us is a beloved and unique child of God. Written in light verse and with lovely pictures, this book is likely to please all the youngsters in your life. The words remind us that we are loved by God, and by the giver—no matter what! What a great message to give to the children in our lives!

This book would make a perfect gift for a first child on their arrival into the family of a new baby. It's short enough for a two-year-old to enjoy, but the message is one for all ages!



***Listen to the Wind—The Story of Dr. Greg and Three Cups of Tea* by Greg Mortenson and Susan L. Roth; collages by Susan L. Roth**

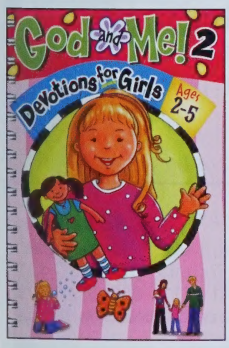
The novel, *Three Cups of Tea*, is on my summer reading list, so I was delighted to find a child's version of this story. The story is the story of the children of Korphe, a village in the mountains of Pakistan. Dr. Greg, a nurse from the United States, got lost



and ill while climbing the mountains of Pakistan and ended up in the village of Korphe. When he was well enough to leave, he wanted to do something for the people of the village. He promised them a school as the children currently had their lessons outside, using sticks to write on the ground.

Dr. Greg kept his promise. It was a long hard journey, but finally the school was finished. Since then, Dr. Greg has overseen the building of 57 more schools in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Today, about 24 000 children attend these schools.

This is a great book for teaching young people about mission, hard work, and caring for others. It's simple language and bright pictures would make it a great book for 4–7 year olds. It also includes a section in the back with photographs of Dr. Greg's work.



God and Me—Devotions for Girls* and *God and Me—Devotions for Boys

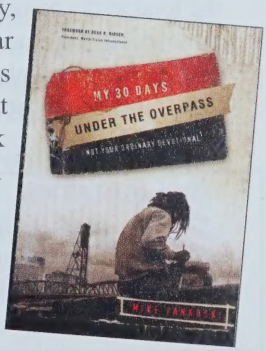
This is a popular series of devotional books for children that come in ages 2–5, 6–9, and 10–12. The devotions are fairly short, and include a verse, short reading, some questions, a prayer, and an activity. With the activity, these would be better to use at some point during the day, not as a bedtime devotional.

I liked these books but do think the 2 to 5 age book would be better suited for children ages 4 to 5 as many of the stories are a little long for a 2-year-old, and most of the activities are better suited to the older age. The books are colourful and attractive and I think would appeal to most children. It's a great and fun way to introduce daily devotions to children. They are also a good 'deal' with over 100 devotions per book, so they should last for about two years!

For youth:

***My 30 Days Under the Overpass—Not Your Ordinary Devotional* by Mike Yankoski**

I know of youth groups that have tried being 'homeless' for a day in the city. They have to beg for money, or eat at a soup kitchen. But, what would it feel like to live like this for a week, or even a month? To have no place to lay your head, no health care, no guarantee of a meal that day, and to live in fear of violence. This is the challenge that Mike Yankoski took on for five full months!



Yankoski decided to do this because he felt

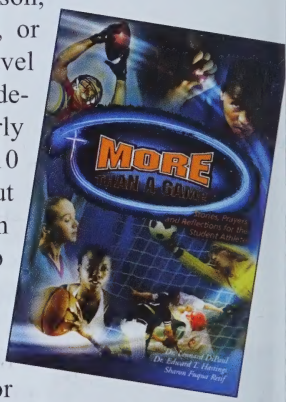
that his talk of faith was not translating into his walk of faith. He believed in God and was attending a Christian College, but he wasn't suffering for his faith or making any kind of difference in this world. After much prayer and preparation, in June 2003, along with his travelling companion Sam, he stepped out of his comfort zone and spent five months living on the streets. This book will help you to move from your comfort zone too!

The best part of this book is it doesn't just get you thinking—it gets you acting too. Most days contain a reflection on scripture, and a reflection from Yankoski's experience, along with a question and a prayer. Each week, there is an action day. Yankoski suggests three different activities for this day, so you can choose the one most relevant to you. I suggest that a young person talk these activities over with a parent first to choose one that the parents agree to. Also, if you know someone who works with the homeless, discuss the activities with them to see which might be the most appropriate. Activities include giving clothes to a homeless shelter, volunteering at a homeless shelter, giving food to the homeless, or providing a motel room for a person for a night.

My only complaint with this book is that it is American. The statistics and experiences are American and although some are translatable, many are not. If you give this book to a young person, do acknowledge this fact, and encourage them to find out more about homelessness in Canada generally, and in their area specifically.

***More Than a Game—Stories, Prayers and Reflections for the Student Athlete* by Leonard DiPaul, Edward T. Hastings, and Sharon Fuqua Retif**

This is a great devotional if you have a young athlete in your life. It contains 30 devotions that offer an athletic reflection, a biblical reflection, ideas to get you thinking, a prayer, and some action ideas. It also has some general prayers for situations, such as starting the season, playing a rival, or preparing to travel as a team. The devotions are fairly short, about 10 minutes long, but do have enough depth to keep your teen thinking about them during the course of their day, or especially as they prepare for their athletic experiences.



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*** Missionary Associates
**** Shared with United Church of Canada

You can support these staff people through your prayers and letters, or by remembering them with a birthday or Christmas card. Also, consider inviting one of them as a speaker to your WMS meeting. Contact The Presbyterian Church in Canada to find out who might be available.

Malawi
Ed and Jackie Hoekstra

Ed has recently become a star playing Dr. David Livingstone for the Dr. David Livingstone Memorial on April 11 in the Kamazu Stadium. He even grew a moustache and sideburns to look the part, and had a safari outfit tailored for him.

The practices were achingly long, but were fascinating to be a part of. These African women are born actors and it is hard to keep them in line. Many enjoy the limelight and it shows. They are all excited and happy to be with each other, enjoying each other's company, and fellowshipping with one another. The director asks for everyone's input and everyone is heard and given a chance to say what they like and don't like. A lot of the discussion is in the Chichewa language so when they burst out laughing about something we laugh along, but we don't really get it.

The play begins with an Arab slave trader who asks the chief to bring him good strong men to work for him. The slave trader promises the chief wealth—sugar and many fine goods—and the chief agrees. As the women sing a Chichewa song of lament, in come the slaves, all chained together, and the slave owners whipping them and yelling harshly as the slaves stagger under their load. The first time it happened, I felt really emotional and told myself to get a grip. The women acted so authentically and here I was in the land where this had actually happened and I got all goose bumpy and wondered, as so many have over the ages, how this could have really happened. I also wondered how it continues to happen in so many parts of the world. When children and adults are trapped into involuntary labour, slavery continues.

The best part about the drama practices was watching the director, Amayi Chirwa. She is the quintessential, large African woman. Dressed either in traditional African fabrics that tent around her, or tightly-fitted national wear, she is large and imposing, with thick legs and feet, and voluminous breasts. One of my favourite memories of our practices was when Amayi Chirwa was lecturing us in Chichewa on some of the finer details of the play. Her cell phone rings and she nonchalantly reaches inside the brassiere of her left breast and takes out her cell phone. She says, "muli bwanji," and proceeds to have a loud animated conversation with whomever is on the other end. The cast of over 70 people politely listen in as her arms wave around and her voice rises and falls. Just as abruptly as it started, when the telephone call ends, she tucks her cell phone back into its rightful place, and

without missing a beat continues on with her lecture to the cast.

In the end, the play was a success. Ed even made the news. Near the end of the play, Ed, as David Livingstone, makes motions that the slave trade is over! His mad dash across the stadium was played over and over again on the news. So, now I have to live with the movie star.

While getting ready for the play, we also welcomed the moderator of the Church of Scotland, his wife, and a few past missionaries from Scotland. They came for partner meetings and for the David Livingstone celebrations. The reception the church gave them at the airport was quite something. It was my first public outing as a Mvano member. The Mvano is like the women's guild in the church. They take care of the sick and the needy, or those in hospital or prison. The Mvano dress in long, calf-length, black skirts and white, long-sleeved blouses with big pockets, large rounded collars, and white belts. Then they tie a white kerchief around their heads. When you see a whole lot of them together they really stand out.

The first time I put the Mvano outfit on I felt a sense of power, woman power, female power. It reminded me of how Aryaan Hirsi Ali, author of the book, *Infidel*, described how she felt when she first put on the hidjab. Aryaan writes, "... suddenly I was interesting, mysterious, powerful. I could see that by the look in people's eyes. It had a thrill to it, a sensuous feeling. It made me feel powerful: underneath this screen lay a previously unsuspected, but potentially lethal, femininity. I was unique: very few people walked with the hidjab, weirdly it made me feel like an individual."

We arrived at the airport where many different Mvano members from around Blantrye Synod were dancing, hugging, and giving each other high fives. I had never seen these women before, but because I was dressed in my Mvano outfit I was one of them. They took my hand and led me singing into the airport. I could see the white tourists looking at us with looks of bewilderment. Who were these loud, boisterous, laughing, singing women? I think it's kind of like seeing a whole group of nuns, but this group was neither stilted nor reserved—they were exuberant with joy. They radiate laughter and even mischief. As I walked among them and laughed with them, I

Overseas Staff Birthdays

December

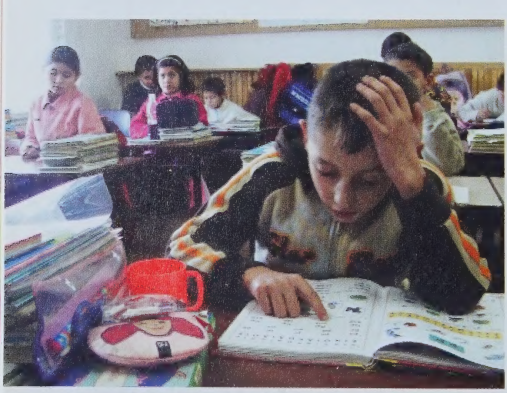
15 - Rick Allen, Kenya
18 - Andrew Paul Allison, Cameroon
27 - Mary Gorombey, Hungary
29 - Rachel Julianna Pandy-Szekeres
29 - Jackie Hoekstra, Malawi
31 - Sheila McKelvie, Pakistan

practised my Chichewa amongst shrieks of laughter. My Chichewa is just so doggone funny.

Then we went outside, hundreds of woman, and the Limbe Children's choir was singing and dancing and the drums were pounding. Someone takes my hand and we begin to dance in a wide circle, three circles deep, to the right and to the left. We dance and dance and sing under the broiling sun. When the guests finally come many hours later, they are greeted with this wild display of honour and affection. We sing, "The guests have safely come, praise our God!" I catch a glimpse of Ed in his clerical collar and his sideburns and moustache and have to refrain from laughing out loud. It is not until I come home that I realize my face is beet red, my forehead still white where my head kerchief protected me from the sun.

In addition to our visitors from Scotland, we also had two groups of teenage boys and their teacher visit from Holland. The first group repaired and overhauled the wood workshop at the local high school. The next three are here to repair and overhaul the machine workshop. Some of these machines have been lying idle for 20 years. There is also a group of 10 men and three women from the Netherlands in Malawi right now helping to build the shelter for the people with handicaps in Ndirande. It was a really special visit as I witnessed the site of groups of white and black labourers working together. We are also looking forward to a Canadian mission group arriving on Saturday.

Thanks to the generosity of family members, we are all coming home to see our first born's, first born in July. The boys are taking the last three days



Despite economic challenges, children work diligently on their studies in the Reformed Church of the sub-Carpathian Ukraine (RCCU) elementary schools. As part of his work, David Pandy-Szekeres works with these schools. A special thank you goes out to all of you who regularly pray for David and these schools, and to those who have supported these schools through the WMS Together We Can! project.

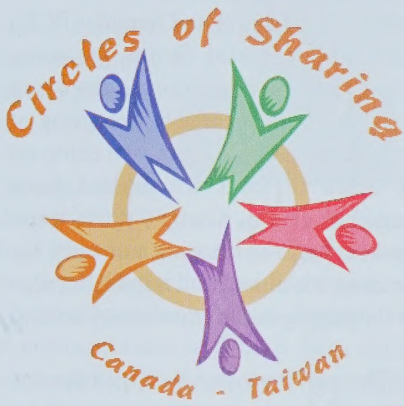
off of school and we should be home on July 2. The baby is due July 1. Ed joins us on July 9. We are all excited to see this new member of the family. The Lord willing, Ed will baptize his grandchild on the long weekend in August, and the next day we will fly home to Malawi. Jacob will be staying the entire summer to work with his brother Luke. We so miss our older children and family members. It will be good to be together. Don't ask me how we are going to get through the next two years separated from those we love—one day at a time.

Well dear friends and family, I will end with some words of wisdom from an old friend who gave me a very encouraging e-mail. She writes, "It does matter … it really matters: every cup of water … every kind word ... every friendly smile … every listening ear … it does matter. It is the beauty giving souls a little place to rest even for a while. It matters. Keep up the faith … strength for the journey… it does matter. I will keep reminding you."

Mtendere (peace), Jackie

Grenada
James and Ann Young

May has been a time of using our "new eyes" to arrive at some conclusions as to how God has led us to see two initial projects that, with your help, will enable the church here to deal with some of the issues in our community.



Circles of Sharing: building closer relationships with women of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan while learning and sharing with each other.

Tour Dates

Vancouver	October 3–4
Calgary	October 5–6
Halifax	October 7–9
Montreal	October 10–12
Niagara Falls	October 14
Council Executive	October 15
Woodstock	October 16
Toronto	October 17

Youth camps are a large part of youth ministry in Grenada as well as on the other islands in the Caribbean. The Presbyterian Church in Grenada (PCG) has held successful camps for some years. They have been using the camp space of another church, dreaming at the same time about their own camp on six acres of land which had been deeded to them. Camps provide an ideal setting for learning not only for our church children and adults, but also for the people in the community around us.

Through Presbyterian World Service & Development (PWS&D) we will be trying to raise funds to support the PCG camp this August at its usual site. Individuals will be encouraged to donate to the camps through PWS&D. For example, $50.00 will send a child to camp, and $125.00 will send a child to camp and also provide funding for sports equipment and to help build up the new camp site.

In another project, Belair Presbyterian Church is a small church with no funds with which to outreach into their community. The community is ridden with poverty and 80% of the children go to school hungry, have little English language and math skills, and absolutely no computer skills at all. This is an immense problem when they go to high school as they are expected to do research and work on the computers there.

So we are looking, with the blessing of International Ministries, for six lap top computers to conduct a test for a future project. We need lap tops because the church is not secure and we will need to carry the lap tops back and forth with us for now. Our aim is to achieve only a few things with the computers. Ann can teach basic keyboarding and I can teach basic computer skills.

In Romans 12, Paul writes that if we will ourselves to be transformed by the renewing of our mind then we will be able to test God's will for us, his good, pleasing, and perfect will. People care for people they know well. God cares for each of us. God has known us from before we were conceived. What has Grenada taught us this month? God's loving grace and the renewal it brings each day is the only sure foundation for ministry everywhere. Like most ministers, I work hard at the projects I am involved in even as I need the affection and approval of others. I know that what may be brought about by God's steady hand in Grenada will not be achieved by any merit or need of mine, but by God's will and the support of my family, friends, and colleagues, who may be some distance from both of us but hold us safely and securely in their prayers.

Pray please, for the renewal of our minds, the contentment of our hearts, and the gift of eyes that see both new things and things in need of renewal. Most of all, pray for the people of Grenada, help them to see that renewal is available to them with each new day by the will and grace of God.

Forward in Faith

Children are amazing! It is hard to understand the way their minds work and how direct and straightforward things are for them. When they have an idea, it is not complicated by what they think they should and should not do. It is simple and very direct.

In my congregation, the session decided to support the WMS projects in Jobat and Eastern Europe during 2009. We have set up a table on which the large Lego building blocks (Duplo) have been used to create an ever-growing building. Each Sunday during the children's time, regardless of the story or discussion, time is taken for each of the children to take a basket throughout the congregation to collect a quarter or any change (or bills) each person decides to donate. Each child takes this job very seriously and if our minister appears to forget, he is reminded quite quickly.

With this weekly routine we have raised close to $1,000 and the building has grown. The children are very enthusiastic about the "job" they have on Sunday morning. They believe what they are doing has meaning and it is as if they have a direct connection with the children for whom the projects are meant. It is simple! Other children need help and they can help!

What a shame adults cannot have the same simple faith, enthusiasm, and energy when approaching a new idea or project. I encourage you to dream a bit and see what wonderful things can happen.

Janet Brewer, Treasurer

President's Itinerary

Sept 1–22	Malawi
Oct 7–9	Halifax
Oct 10–12	Montreal
Oct 13–18	Council Executive
Oct 22	Manotick (Quebec and Eastern Ontario Synodical)
Oct 23–25	Stroud Presbyterian Church
Oct 27	Arnprior WMS

Synodical

Alberta and NW Synodical held their annual meeting on April 25 at Camp Kannawin. Dawn Flint, president, called the meeting to order, and Millie Freeman and Mavis McKay led the opening worship. Our guest speaker, Rev. Connie Lee gave an enjoyable presentation on her recent trip to India, emphasizing the people that she met.

The high point of the day was the birthday celebration of Isobel Macrae who turned 101! Isobel is a long-time member of the First Church WMS in Edmonton. We are grateful to God for her dedication to the WMS.

-Marg Befus

The 62nd Annual Meeting of the **Synodical of Southwestern Ontario** was held on April 21–22 at Knox Church, Leamington. The theme was Living Our Faith.

From L to R: Council President Druse Bryan; Essex-Kent Presbyterial President Carolyn Reid; President of Synodical Jessie Knox.

Isobel Macrae celebrating her 101st birthday.

Synodical president, Jessie Knox, Essex-Kent president, Carolyn Reid, and Knox WMS president, Mary McKay welcomed the group.The Rev. Scott McAndless conducted a meaningful worship and communion service—an inspiration to us as we began our meeting.

Helen Hart and Susie Strickler led the singing before each session. It was joyful, rousing, and uplifting as we sang to the glory of God.

We were privileged to have as our guest speaker, Stephen Allen, Associate Secretary, Justice Ministries. Stephen's dynamic presentation, Desert Journey —In Search of Dignity, showed some of the struggles of the people in Nogales, Mexico, which shares the border with Arizona. The problems these people face are not unique as thousands of migrant workers, legally and illegally, cross the Mexico/US border annually to seek employment to enable them to provide for their families. The dangers

they face crossing the border are horrible, but for most it is their only hope. We asked, "how can we live our faith?" and Stephen responded, "by being present in the world."

Other highlights included greetings from Druse Bryan, national president, and inspirational and informative workshops—one by Rev. Chris O'Reilly, and one by Rev. Anne Yee Hibbs. Regional staff reports were received and we felt fortunate to have these dedicated people working on our behalf.

Having enjoyed good meals, fellowship, study, and worship, we returned to our homes feeling blessed.

-Gail Connor

Marg Buschman attended the Synodical of Southwestern Ontario for the first time and she said that the experience left her with a greater awareness of the importance of giving our time, effort, and money for mission. We are not all called to serve in the mission field, but each of us can help by supporting those who do go in whatever way God guides us. She also noted the high level of enthusiasm as people arrived, some of whom had gotten up even before the birds to do the two-to-four-hour drive to arrive for the 9:30 a.m. registration.

Presbyterial

Niagara Presbyterial's annual June picnic took the form of a celebration of Mrs. Isobel McKeown's 100th birthday. Mrs. McKeown is a very active honourary president of Niagara Presbyterial. We suspect that she might be the oldest active member of the WMS in Canada.

The weather did not cooperate with our picnic plans, so we were very thankful for Scottlea Presbyterian Church's nice new church hall for our potluck lunch. Bonnie Roland entertained us with a paper-and-pencil game and an account of how things were in 1909.

Niagara Presbyterial celebrated Mrs. Isobel McKeown's 100th birthday. Pictured are president Christine Cummings and Mrs. McKeown with the cake.

After the guest of honour had cut the birthday cake, various people reminisced about their associations with Mrs. McKeown and her late husband, the Rev. Bill McKeown. In thanking those who had arranged the party and everyone for being there, Mrs. McKeown said that she has been involved with mission for 95 years. At the age of five, her parents gave her a hen to care for and she was told that any chickens produced were hers to dispose of as she wished. The hen produced five chickens which the young Isobel sold for one cent each. She then donated the five cents to mission!

Serve The Lord With Gladness was the theme for the **Maitland Presbyterial** meeting held on May 25 at Lucknow Presbyterian Church. There was a fun time of fellowship and delicious desserts served by the Lucknow women before the meeting. About 60 women from all the various WMS groups attended.

The president, Joanne Lennips, constituted the meeting with prayer and the Rev. Peggy Kinsmen welcomed everyone. Marion and Norma Raynard led the group in a lively sing-song and the worship time was led by the Brussels group. The Rev. Terry Samuel delighted us with special music on his trumpet. Erlma Haldenby, representative from Council, shared with us the disturbing facts about human trafficking and encouraged us to sign a petition against human trafficking.

The guest speakers were the Rev. Susan Samuel, minister from Kincardine and her husband, the Rev. Terry Samuel, who spoke about their educational trip to Taiwan. They shared how the Presbyterian churches in Taiwan are growing rapidly by "actualizing the kingdom of God." The hymn, All Praise to Thee My God, and prayer closed the meeting.

Follow Me was the theme for **Peterborough Presbyterial's** annual meeting held on May 20 at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Campbellford. After the gathering music, led by Jackie Kelly and Helen King on the piano, the president, Joy Randall, warmly welcomed everyone. The opening worship was conducted by Jacqueline Beamish and Pat Ross.

The Rev. Blaine Dunnet, minister of St. Andrew's, and Joan Smith, the vice-president of WMS Council, brought greetings. We learned that the national WMS would be hosting seven women from the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan in October. A special event for them, Circles of Sharing, will take place on October 17 at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Toronto. Joan also spoke about the Presbyterian National Women's Gathering to be held on May 20–23, 2011, and reminded everyone of the two WMS Together We Can projects.

After the installation of officers for the coming year, the president conducted the business meeting where all reports were adopted. The treasurer's report and the 2009 objective of $18 000 were reviewed and accepted. Holly Hall, the presbyterial historian, asked for volunteers to assist with the 25-year review before our history is submitted to the archives. Plans for the trip to the PCC museum in June were given by Muriel Bell. Cecilia Morris spoke about our annual Autumn Adventure on September 26 when our guest speaker will be the Rev. Dr. Glynis Williams, Program Coordinator for Refugees, PWS&D.

After a delicious lunch catered by the women of St. Andrew's and gathering music, Joan Smith took us on a trip, via PowerPoint, to Eastern Europe where she and eleven other WMS members

from across Canada had visited the previous October on a mission exposure tour. Under the expert guidance of David Pandy-Sekeres, the group had visited many schools, churches, a model farm and other projects which the PCC, PWS&D, WMS, and individual congregations and WMS groups support. The closing communion service was led by the Rev. Dr. Lynda Reid.

Brockville Presbyterial met for their May Rally on May 27 at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Kemptville.

Margaret Reynolds, president, welcomed the members from the six area groups. Ventnor led devotions and Henny Donkersteeg and Donna McIlveen led the bible study on the theme, Mission: The Work of Many Hands.They used Acts 2:31–39 as a model for the church of Christ yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Eileen Chambers was pianist and soloist.

The president presented the Kemptville group with a Certificate of Recognition for 70 years of mission. Also, a petition was circulated regarding Bill C-268 and the trafficking of children. This is an especially urgent matter in respect to the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver.

Then, Rosemary Rutley and Margaret Reynolds acted out a courtroom drama enlisting members as international partners in mission. Rev. Samer Kandalaft was our guest speaker. He was born in Syria and was the first resident minister ordained by the Presbyterian Synod in Lebanon. He and his wife and son came to Canada as refugees fleeing the lawlessness and rise of Islamic Fundamentalism. Many Christians are becoming martyrs for their faith.

The June Rally of the **Presbyterial of Lanark-Renfrew** took place at Almonte Presbyterian Church on June 6. The theme was Peace and Joy based on Romans 5:1–11. President Lottie Sutherland welcomed everyone and constituted the meeting with prayer. On the 65th anniversary of D-Day, the president led devotions by comparing the peace resulting from the soldiers' lives risked at Normandy on D-Day with the peace and joy that comes from Jesus giving his life for all.

This picture, taken at Knox Presbyterian Church (Burgoyne), celebrates the presentation of WMS pins to long-term WMS members. Pictured are: Rev. Chuck Moon, Judy Morrow, Diane Maggs, Leone Gingrich, Rae Salmon, Janet Gowanlock, Angelia Burkinshaw, and Elda Grieve.

The secretary, Judy Postma, was introduced and roll call was taken with 27 women responding. Margaret Sams, Tilana Knoetze, and Joan Hilliard gave highlights from the synodical meeting held in Smiths Falls on April 17–18. Lottie spoke on the Annual Council Meeting at Crieff. It was noted that Arnprior is celebrating 125 years of WMS at its church this year. Prayers were presented for local and distant causes and a delicious pot luck lunch was enjoyed by all.

The afternoon began with prayer followed by fun and fellowship. Judy Postma and Lottie Sutherland had some interesting and interactive games by which the women could learn more about each other. Lottie led a discussion on Change and why it is feared. A film on the history of the WMS was shown and we noted the many changes that have occurred since it was founded. Lottie read a letter regarding human trafficking which is now occurring in Canada for the 2010 Olympic Games and she had available a petition to sign. We were also told to write to our M.P. to protest such activity. The day's meeting closed with prayer.

-Vivian Young

Local

The ladies of the **Knox North Easthope WMS** were delighted to have their April meeting at the Maples Home for Seniors. This is the 125th year of the society and the ladies marked the occasion with a photograph of this year's group.

The theme of the meeting was summed up in the phrase "quarantined by fear," as heard in the current news. It could also have been used in the Easter account. The frightened disciples barricaded themselves behind locked doors. When following Christ's command, we step out from behind closed doors and we discover that the power Jesus has breathed on us is a Holy Spirit of power. We are freed from fear, freed to live fully, and freed to do the work God has called us to do.

photo: Bill Gladding/Tavistock Gazette

Members of the Knox Presbyteria Church, North Easthope, Women Missionary Society for 2009 includ left to right, seated: first vice-president Ann Wybrow, treasurer Isabel Patterson, president Lois Horne, secretary Ruth Hart, past president Florence Fawcett; standing: Grace Campbell, Marjor Irvine, Jean Fryfogel, Mary Horne Christina Fryfogel, Isabelle Satchell, Audrey Rutherford, Myrna Schell, and Bonnie Satchell. Absent were members Sandra Wettlaufer, Helen Walker, Mary Lichty, and Doris Hyde.

The Mary and Martha WMS and members of the congregation took part in Strathroy's Mission Awareness Sunday in April. Pictured are Kathy Boose, Jeff Reid, Karen Reid, Jill Morden, Marion Lumsden, Kate Walsh, Steven Baker, the Rev. Steve Boose, Marie Smith, Pat Copeland, Gertrude Waldie, Margaret Smith, Virginia Campbell, Hilde Morden, Marilyn Howlett, Joan Wagner, Bea Veitch, Julie Morden, and Wilma Bell.

Hymns were sung throughout the program, celebrating the Easter season. The Mission Study was led by Marj Irvine. Marj focused on missionary, Denise van Wissen, who is originally from Guelph and is currently working with the Mayan women in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala. Denise is educating the women about nutrition along with encouraging them to recognize their own value in God's sight.

Knox Presbyterian Church WMS was organized on December 19, 1884. Support was given to missionaries serving in the East, notably India, and China and among our Canadian aboriginal peoples. Early meetings took the form of a Bible study, which is still used today. The ladies learn about various missionaries furthering God's word to other parts of the world as well as at home.

(reprinted from the Tavistock Gazette, April 22, 2009, edited for space)

Friday, October 17 was the day hidden talents came out at **Weston Presbyterian Church**. The WMS Elizabeth Heath Group decided to celebrate their 70th Anniversary by holding a Café Night as one of their fundraisers for the women of Guatemala, in conjunction with their study *Making Connections: Maya People of Guatemala and Aboriginal People of Canada*. It was an evening of fun for the whole congregation that included singing, joke telling, dancing, and skits. There was information about the Maya women at each table.

continued on page 46

St. Andrew's, Welland, celebrated Mission Awareness Sunday in April with guest speaker, Rev. Paul McLean. Paul is helping a team of 10 Hakka ministers and elders translate the Bible into the Hakka language. Pictured are the Rev. Paul McLean, Mary Beth McLean, Marilyn Leslie (WMS president), Lori Sinclair, and the Rev. Guy Sinclair.

Circulation News

Katherine Allen

By now, your *Glad Tidings* secretary/contact person, should have received their summer mailing. This will provide them with all the information they need to renew your subscription!

Here are a few ways you can make their job easier:

- Have your subscription money ready when she starts collecting. The 2010 subscription cost is $14.00 for six issues.
- Make sure your address on the subscription list is correct. The post office requires you to include a box number or street address, including apartment number and postal code.
- If you have transferred to another group, please quote your subscription number which can be found on the address label of the magazine.
- Remember, if your group has disbanded, you can still subscribe to the magazine. Your name can either remain on the congregational list and a contact person is appointed, or your name can be transferred to our individual subscription list.

Just one final reminder that we can supply you with up to 20 free copies of *Glad Tidings* for promotion. This is a great way to let the women in your congregation know about the magazine, and the work of the Women's Missionary Society. Don't forget to ask them how they enjoyed reading the magazine, and if they might consider a subscription of their own.

(left to right) Noreen Bowman, Treasurer, Elizabeth Heath, President, Diane Osborne, Publicity and Corresponding Secretary, Cathy Iaboni, Recording Secretary, and (Back row) Rev. Dr. Lance Odland, minister of Weston Presbyterian Church.

In the Society from page 45

In late November, this same group produced a cookbook and again dedicated the proceeds to the Maya women of Guatemala. At the annual congregational meeting of Weston Presbyterian Church on Feb. 8, members of the WMS presented a large mock-up cheque for $1,800 made out to PWS&D and asking that it be directed towards helping the Maya women start small businesses (PWBUS01), with a special emphasis on purchasing an industrial sewing machine for a women's group.

-Diane Osborne

PASS ME ALONG:

Sharing your *Glad Tidings* is a great way to promote the WMS, and to promote *Glad Tidings*. When you have finished reading your copy, encourage …

A new mom to read, I Promise (p. 17)

Your youth leader to read, Invite Them In (p. 20)

Your stewardship chair to read, Forward In Faith (p. 39)

IN REMEMBRANCE

Kay Sisson
Lillian Dickson WMS, St. Andrew's, Calgary AB

Margaret I. McGuire
Elmvale WW-WMS, Elmvale ON

Mrs. Florence Jamieson
Mrs. Dorothy Oaks
Presbyterian Women, Knox, Glenarm ON

Madeleine Edward
Afternoon WMS, Knox, Goderich ON

Frances Annette
Knox Presbyterian Church, Guelph ON

Nancy Carole Wynen
St. Andrew's Women's Missionary Society, Guelph ON

Muriel Stewart
Amos Presbyterian Church Dromore WMS, Holstein ON

Jean Grace Croft
St. Andrew's, Kitchener ON

Ethel Miller
St. Andrew's WMS, Owen Sound ON

Mrs. Retta Thomson
First Presbyterian Church, Port Colborne ON

Mrs. Florence (Florrie) Thomson
Lochwinnoch WMS, Refrew ON

Mildred Branscombe
Myossio WMS Auxiliary, Knox, St. Catharines ON

Agnes Clark
Adda MacLean Auxiliary, St. Giles, St. Catharines ON

Leta Lawrence
Westminster WMS, Sault Ste. Marie ON

Ollie (Olive) Berry
Knox Presbyterian, Tara ON

Names for In Remembrance can be sent by post or email. Please ensure names are typed or clearly written, and include your WMS group name (or congregation) and location.

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Glad Tidings

November/December 2009

Christmas Worship Service

Also: Human Trafficking
The Gift of Time
Adventures for Advent

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How shall we receive the Christ child?
As servants, repentant and
hospitable, humbly welcoming.

Cover Photo: Barry Fricker

Glad Tidings

November/December 2009
Volume 85, No. 6

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Glad Tidings reports on aspects of the Women's Missionary Society on all levels.

Glad Tidings challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally, and internationally.

Glad Tidings through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired, and motivated to action.

GladTidings provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters, and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS or by the Editor.

Heather Jones

From the Editor's Desk

I have had many opportunities to appreciate the size of our Presbyterian Church in Canada. I have learned to close any conversation with another member of our denomination by saying, "It's a small church. We'll probably meet again." It has been 20 years since I contributed an Advent service to *Glad Tidings*. Now, I'm writing this editorial. We meet again!

I remember quite clearly my conversation with June Stevenson after I had given her my piece. "It's the same story, but every year, I get a service that is new and different." Rev. Helen Smith has written the service for this year, and, once again, June was right. The Christmas story is the same, but because of the richness of the story, and the breadth of traditions for celebrating it, there is, once again, a new perspective. I hope that this year's service will make the old story new again for all of your local groups.

Other articles are included in the issue that I hope will help you prepare for Christmas. *The Gift of Time* and *Adventures for Advent* are both pieces that offer a younger perspective on Advent. Fortunately, one doesn't have to be young to appreciate a young perspective!

It is lovely to have the chance to celebrate with this seasonal issue of *Glad Tidings*, but there is, as always, need to study more sober topics as well. I know that many of you will be using the Refugee study resource over the next few months. I hope that Charles Deogratias' story will supplement your study. June Campbell's article—*Human Trafficking*—may be difficult to read, but we do need to hear the tragic stories of people who are being treated so poorly, and the injustice and oppression of the system must be addressed. As we prepare to celebrate the birth of the one who came to proclaim release to the captives and bring abundant life to all, we also need to take our place in his ministry.

I am grateful for the opportunity to become better acquainted with, and to serve the WMS as Interim Editor of *Glad Tidings* for the coming year. It is my hope and my prayer that our magazine will continue to serve the WMS by encouraging study and discussion, by fostering fellowship within the Society, and by helping to spread the Good News of God's steadfast love for the world and its people.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING:

By June Campbell

Trafficking is a term we most often associate with some illicit or illegal product. We talk of drug traffickers or trafficking of stolen property or illegal weapons. Too many people don't know that human trafficking is at least as serious a problem as the drug or weapons trade. Perhaps the worst part of human trafficking is that women and children are being treated and used as commodities. They are denied basic dignity and are sold to the highest bidder.

The modern trade in human beings is not very different from the African slave trade of the 16th and 17th centuries. Victims of human traffickers are coerced, recruited under false pretences, or physically abducted, and transported to a place where they are kept, against their will, and forced to do whatever the traffickers decide. Human trafficking is not just 'regular migration', nor is it even smuggling people. Migration and smuggling both result in people moving to a different area, but they remain in control of their own lives. People who travel or are smuggled across a border often pay steep fees to help them escape to a place they believe will offer them a better life. People who are trafficked

are bought and sold and used. They are never free.

If we have heard of this problem at all in Canada, we have thought of it as a problem for Asian countries where 'sex-trade tourism' is a major industry. As difficult as it may be for us to believe, human trafficking is a huge problem, and it is not just happening 'out there'. In 2009, the RCMP estimates that 800 to 1,200 people are trafficked in Canada per year. Some people who are working to address the problem suggest that the number is probably closer to 15,000.

Many of us will be even more distressed to know that in 2009, trafficking women into Canada rose as those involved brought more women into the country ready to be used in Vancouver during the Olympics. The women and girls were brought in this year to avoid what is expected to be heightened security measures that will be put in place closer to the Olympic celebrations.

While there are other reasons for human trafficking, such as collecting 'donors' for human organs or forced labour or military service, the vast majority of human trafficking is for sexual exploitation. The underlying causes of human trafficking are a combination of extreme poverty (including deplorable conditions in many aboriginal reserves in Canada), criminal greed, and perverted sex drives.

An examination of the causes and implications of human trafficking requires a significantly more extensive venue than a single article in our mission magazine. Some might wonder if the topic even belongs here. To this I would emphatically respond: "Evil prevails when good people do nothing!" This subject came before WMS Council at Crieff Hills in May 2008 when Lorette Noble, President of the Catholic Women's League, told us of their advocacy work with government concerning this and other social justice issues. It was followed up at Council in May 2009 with a half-hour presentation on Human Trafficking. The response to that presentation was very positive, and led to the suggestion that it be on the agenda for the Fall 2009 executive meeting of WMS Council. Justice Ministries of The Presbyterian Church in Canada has given the mandate to the Women's Missionary Society for any action which might be initiated within our Church.

There are many efforts currently being undertaken to combat this horrific situation. Joy Smith, MP for Kildonan-St.Paul, Manitoba, has been steering a private member's bill through Parliament which seeks to amend the Criminal Code to include a minimum punishment of five-year imprisonment for offences involving trafficking of persons under

MODERN DAY SLAVERY

the age of 18 years. It is almost astonishing to know that other countries have recognized the seriousness of this crime by legislating minimum sentences for convictions of five (Thailand) to ten (USA) years. Currently there is no minimum sentence for people convicted in Canada of this crime.

The bill received good support. More than 14,000 names were collected on petitions that were circulated throughout Canada.* Many WMS members were involved in collecting these signatures. The bill passed third and final reading in the House of Commons on September 30. This is a surprising and very welcome accomplishment for a private members bill. It is now before the Senate. A new petition is being circulated to encourage the Senate to pass the bill. I have a list of 20 organizations, most of them faith-based, within Canada which are involved in this battle. The website www.canadafightshumantrafficking.com is seeking to draw efforts together under one umbrella.

The Religious Conference of Roman Catholic Orders has published "A Lobbying Guide to the Laws Relative to the Trafficking in Women and Children." You will find helpful information which can be used if you wish to write to the Prime Minister of Canada, the Justice Minister and Attorney General of Canada, your local MP, and/or your local newspaper. You can also write to your local provincial legislator to ask what your province is doing. The provinces are responsible for health care, child protection and transition houses: all these services are needed by the victims of human trafficking.

Isaiah 42:22 states: "This is a people plundered and looted, all of them trapped in pits, or hidden away in prisons. They have become plunder, with no one to rescue them; they have been made loot, with no one to say 'Send them back'." This is an apt description of today's situation for too many of our sisters and little children. Ephesians 4:11 instructs us to have nothing to do with evil—the fruitless deeds of darkness but rather ***expose them to the light***. Shall we or shall we not make a start to advocate for church/community awareness and comprehensive government action concerning human trafficking? We are told in Psalms that the stones will cry out in praise to God if we humans do not do so. Surely the very stones will cry out in outrage to God if we sit still and make no attempts to prevent these crimes against the most vulnerable in our society, our world.

*The mailing sent to all WMS groups in early fall contained an information piece and a copy of the petition related to the private members' bill. For further copies of these resources, contact the WMS office.

June Campbell is a current member of the Justice Ministries Advisory Committee and a recently retired member of WMS Council. She is active in the Barrie Presbyterial, and enjoys family activities, singing, reading, and writing.

Charles Deogratias' Long and Winding Road

As I have heard and read about the story of the Reverend Charles Deogratias, a line from Rufus Wainwright's classic song *He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother* has been going through my mind: "The road is long, with many a winding turn, that leads us to who knows where, who knows when." From a childhood spent in a refugee camp in Tanzania, through university studies in the USA and Canada, across the globe to the air base at Kandahar, Afghanistan, and back to the St. Jean military base at Richelain, Quebec, Rev/Captain Deogratias has seen more roads and more turns than most of us can even imagine.

As our church and our WMS groups study Refugee issues this year, Charles' story is a resource that offers another perspective to add to our knowledge. His family fled the civil war in Rwanda in the late 1950s, and escaped to neighbouring Tanzania where they lived for more than 40 years. Charles was born in that

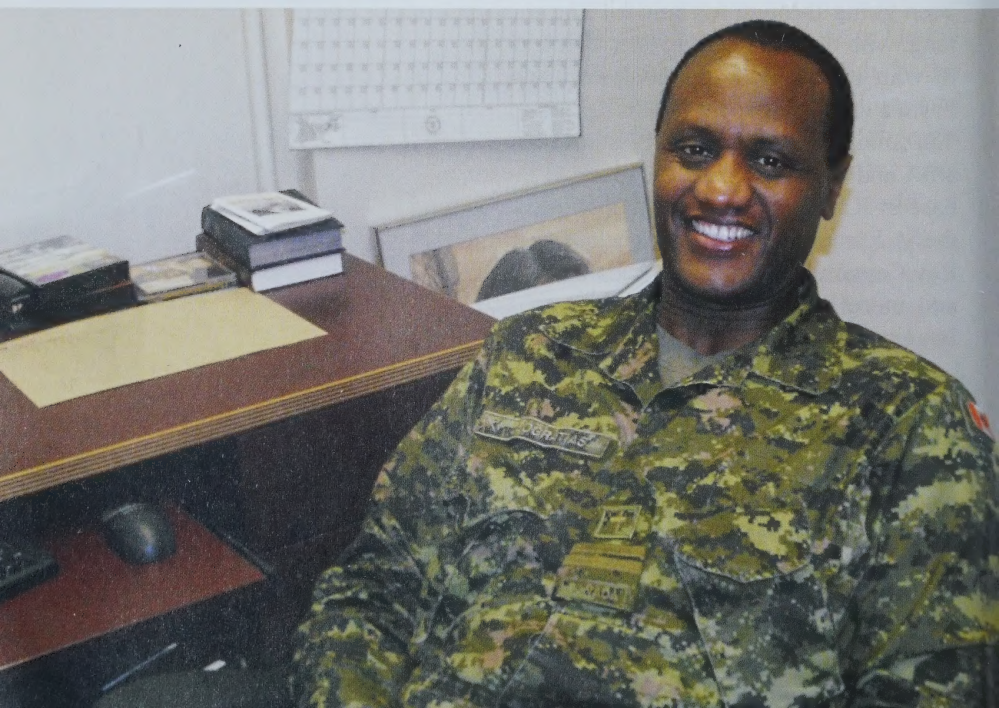
refugee camp, and grew up struggling against hardships of many different kinds. He speaks of the faith of his mother as a strong influence. She believed that God would take care of them, and she passed her faith on to her son. Charles has a vivid memory of a night when he and his siblings were asking for food. She had only water to give them, but still she said, "God is good."

"We were asking for food, not for the goodness of God." he recalls. The very next day, a UN shipment of food arrived. They all came to recognize that shipment as evidence of God's faithfulness and goodness.

Charles also clearly remembers the medical personnel, who came and worked in the refugee camp, exposing themselves to hardship, disease, and grief. He saw their commitment, and their service, as evidence of God's concern for him. When he was about six, Charles was malnourished and had contracted measles. Dr. Andrew, an Anglican missionary doctor, gave medicine and powdered milk to Charles' mother. But that doctor gave more than just medical treatment. Charles says, "His words to me changed my life."

With confidence and kindness, putting his hand on Charles' swollen belly, Dr. Andrew said: "It will be OK. You will be OK." The doctor was right. Charles recovered from the illness and has remembered the kindness ever since.

People were dying from the measles outbreak. Dr. Andrew didn't know that Charles would recover, but



he did know, and Charles has come to believe, that whether he lived or whether he died, he would be OK. It took some time to understand the faith behind those words. The doctor gave up the security of medical practice in the west, and risked his own health to live and work among the poorest of the poor, to save lives, and to bring hope. He did so confident in those words of faith: "Whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's." (Romans 14:8) Dr. Andrew shared that confidence with his young patient, and Charles says he has had many opportunities to share those words with others who are in difficult and even life-and-death situations.

When children know that they and their families struggle to survive from one day to the next, it can be very difficult to concentrate on education. When the lessons are conducted under a tree and there are no books at all, learning is a huge challenge. Charles remembers the special days when deliveries of supplies arrived at the camp. When he received a pencil, "it was as if heaven had come down to earth." Despite these challenges, there was a will to learn, and there were people ready to share knowledge, so Charles learned. At the age of 20, he made his way to Kenya where he was hired to work at a Youth With a Mission camp. Through contacts there, he had the chance to take college courses in Kenya, and to visit the US.

Eventually, through scholarships and support from people he met through church contacts, Charles graduated from Denver Seminary in Colorado. Determined to share the way others had shared with him, Charles returned to Tanzania in the early 1990s to teach in the refugee camp. Unfortunately, the situation was deteriorating in the region once again. Many of those who had fled Rwanda 30 years earlier were trying to find ways to return to their homeland. The response from those who had stayed in Rwanda was to declare war on the Tutsis. The tragic story of the genocide that followed is well known. What isn't as well known is the fact that people living and working outside Rwanda were also being kidnapped and murdered.

Once again, Charles fled. He eventually arrived at the Detroit/Windsor border, and was granted asylum in Canada. After settling here, and gaining Canadian citizenship, Charles attended Knox College, was ordained to congregational ministry, and served in the Barrie Presbytery. It was during his time in Barrie that he had the opportunity to hear the Commander of UN forces in Rwanda, Romeo Dallaire, speak, and to meet him. Inspired by his story, and feeling challenged to serve the wider community, Charles proceeded to enrol in the Canadian Armed Forces to offer his skills and strength to the military personnel through their chaplaincy program.

In 2007, Charles was sent with the army unit from Valcartier to serve in Kandahar. The war in Afghanistan has created hundreds of thousands of

refugees. He says that while there, he saw Afghani faces of despair that matched the Rwandan ones he had seen in the refugee camp while growing up. Having been taught and inspired by his mother to rely on faith to raise him above circumstances of suffering, he felt that this time he would be one of the ones to bring hope, in the same way that Dr. Andrew, other medical staff, teachers, and other relief workers had brought hope to him in Tanzania.

The story of a refugee is, by nature, a story of suffering. In sharing his story, Charles doesn't hide his suffering. He says that for him, the cross is central to his life, and to all situations of misery because it is at the cross that suffering meets hope.

Having survived his suffering, Charles is determined to live, and to encourage others to live as witnesses to hope.

Having survived his suffering, Charles is determined to live, and to encourage others to live as witnesses to hope.

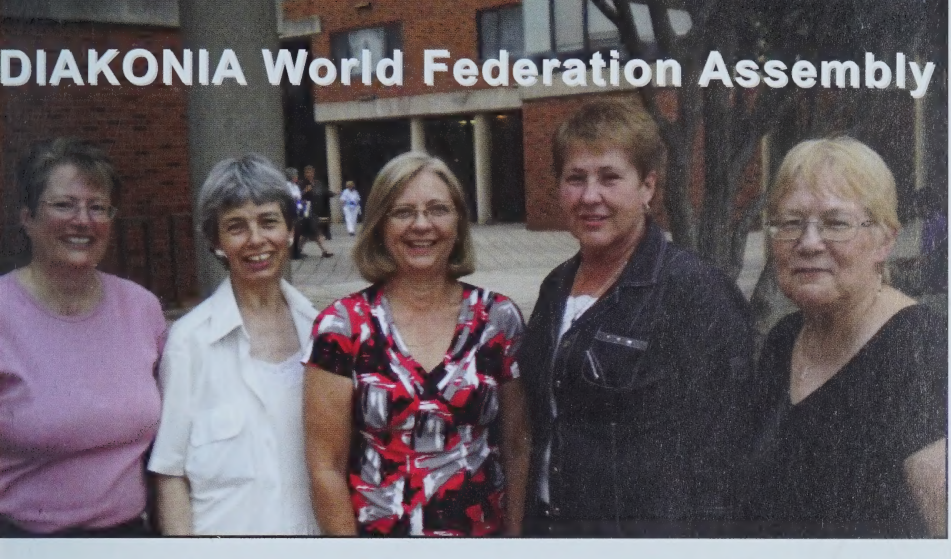
We may never know the result of our actions. Those nurses and doctors, they could not have looked at us in that refugee camp, struggling to survive that outbreak of measles, and predicted that any of these children would make anything of themselves, and would live to bring hope to others who are suffering. They couldn't know that I would survive, or that I would remember their kindness. In the same way, our presence can bring change and hope even though we can't know it.

When I was in Afghanistan, we had the chance to share some small things that Canadians had sent to us for the children there. We saw hope come into their eyes. We don't know what will happen because of that experience of caring.

I'm not at all certain what Charles Deogratias feels is the song for his lifetime, but after reading about him, and talking with him, I am convinced that Rufus Wainwright's words describe Charles' outlook on life. *He (or she!) ain't heavy, he's my brother (or sister). His welfare is my concern. If I'm burdened, it is with sadness that everyone's heart isn't filled with the gladness of love for one another.*

As we study the causes and the realities of life for refugees, we can become burdened by a sense of helplessness, a feeling of being overwhelmed by the scope of the problems. It is important for us to hold on to the hope that sustains Charles and so many others, who work in situations of suffering and injustice. We never know what act of kindness we do will give hope or inspiration to another. So we carry on; why not share?

DIAKONIA World Federation Assembly



Crossroads of Grace: Revive and Reconcile
July 20–27, 2009, Atlanta, GA, USA

"The future of the church in the 21st century lies in diaconal ministry—in meeting the needs of the poor and caring for creation," the Rev. Dr. Walter Altmann, Moderator of the World Council of Churches, said in his keynote address to the 20th Assembly.

Our PCC Order of Diaconal Ministers is one of the 64 diaconal associations and communities from 34 countries that make up DIAKONIA World Federation. The Federation was founded in the Netherlands in 1947 to promote reconciliation among diaconal institutions after World War II.

Dr. Altmann, also president of the Lutheran Church in Brazil (IECLB), said: "Diakonia is modelled by Christ's life and service. It is a move from God through us to meet human suffering and need, and is embedded in the church's holistic mission."

Shirley Franklin, Mayor of the host city, also addressed the assembly, describing her goal of wiping out homelessness in Atlanta and making the connection to assembly participants' own commitment to meeting the needs "of the least of these" around the world.

In her keynote presentation, Sara Miles, author of *Take This Bread: A Radical Conversion*, spoke of wandering into an Episcopal church in San Francisco one Sunday at the age of 46, and taking her first communion. "Jesus welcomes everyone to this table, they said, so I ate the bread and drank the wine," Miles explained, "and I knew this guy Jesus was in my mouth."

Miles described how this experience changed her life: she started a food pantry on tables around the altar in the sanctuary of St. Gregory's Church. It initially served 35 people weekly, and

now provides fresh fruit and vegetables for over 800 families each week. St. Gregory's has also provided start-up funds and training for 18 other food pantries in the area, including one soon starting at the county hospital for patients being released.

Miles sees the essence of diaconal ministry as "giving the ministry away," always stepping down from leadership positions to enable clients to become part of the volunteer staff. "Young hoodlums in our area have become healers and savers for other people," Miles explained. "And that experience for them has been transformative."

Dr. Glory E. Dharmaraj, Director of Spiritual Formation and Mission Theology for the Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church, presented a two-part Bible study which encouraged participants to keep "one eye on the *shalom* of God and one eye on the pain of the world" in their work.

At the final plenary session, members ratified letters to US President Barack Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, expressing the group's disappointment over the US government's refusal to grant visas to some deaconesses chosen to attend the assembly from Brazil. A letter was also sent to the Methodist Church in Fiji expressing concern and support as the church faces political unrest in Fiji.

During the eight-day event, assembly participants also visited faith-based agencies serving the poor and homeless in Atlanta, and could choose from 35 workshops covering topics such as human trafficking, health issues, the environment, multi-culturalism and the church, advocacy efforts for the voiceless, and overcoming violence.

DIAKONIA World Federation includes some 20,000 deaconesses, deacons, and diaconal workers in its membership groups. Attending the 2009 assembly in Atlanta were 336 participants from 30 countries. Held every four years, the World Federation's next assembly will be in Berlin, Germany in 2013.

During closing worship at Central Presbyterian Church in downtown Atlanta, retiring president Deaconess E. Louise Williams said, "We know well that following Jesus in diaconal ministry isn't always smooth sailing. We know that we are likely to encounter rough seas and high waves. What we don't always realize, though, is that the rough seas and high waves are not always caused by the forces of evil. Sometimes they are caused by the strong wind of God's spirit seeking to get our attention, inviting us to change course."

Lynda Reid, Education Consultant for the Synod/Synodical of Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda, was the convenor of the program committee for the assembly. Members of the Order of Diaconal Ministry of our church designed the Spirituality Centre for the assembly. Janice MacInnes and Ann Blane led workshops during the event while Margaret Robertson organized the small group leaders.

Ontario Presbyterian Chorus tours Switzerland

By Katherine Allen

The Ontario Presbyterian Chorus (OPC) enjoyed a 12-day tour of Switzerland in early July. Our motto is that we are a choir with a message, a mission and a vision for a lost and needy world. As we travelled, our message of God's love and peace was spread through our ministry of music. We were grateful for the opportunities we had both to provide for the spiritual needs of the congregations we sang in, and to enjoy exploring this beautiful part of God's creation.

Under the direction of Alastair McCallum, accompanied by Mina Park on piano, and Marion McCallum and Beth Clelland on violin, the choir presented three concerts and participated in two worship services. On Sunday, July 5, the choir was in Lausanne to take part in the morning service at the Scots Kirk. In the evening we sang at All Saints Church in Vevey. We were surprised to find that, following the concert in Vevey, we were stranded for a couple of hours. An unusually heavy rainfall caused flash flooding on the street outside the church.

On July 7, we sang at the Calvin Auditorium in Geneva, located within the old walled city. When we arrived at the auditorium, we saw participants who were gathered for an international conference celebrating John Calvin's 500th birthday. The rest of the day was spent touring the city before the evening concert.

On Sunday, July 12, we sang at St. Aubin Church during the morning worship service and held a concert in the evening. The OPC men had the opportunity of singing in French with Ian Woods' Swiss male chorus. The combined choirs sounded fabulous.

Each day was filled with adventures as we explored beautiful Switzerland. We visited a Swiss pioneer village in Ballenberg, the Giessbach Falls, the spectacular Trummelbach Falls (which is described as ten cascades hidden behind a rock wall), Interlaken, Gruyeres village and castle, the Callier factory (where we bought lots of chocolate), and the Victorinox Knife factory. On July 8, we took the cable car in Lauterbrunnen to Grutschalp where some people took a cog-train to Murren while the rest of us walked the 6 km to the town. Those who walked experienced the amazing power and beauty of God's creation in the wild flowers, majestic mountains, and the stereotypically picturesque Swiss cows with bells around their necks.

On July 10, we enjoyed our visit to an underground lake in St. Lèonard and the St. Bernard museum in Martigny. Our lunch that day was at Caves Emery vineyards, which was an amazing experience.

On July 11, we travelled up! Our destination was Gornergrat located at 10,132 ft. From there, we had a clear view of the Matterhorn. We spent our final day visiting Bern, the capital of Switzerland. Throughout our visit, we appreciated our accommodation at the Hotel School in Lausanne where they teach people to become chefs and hotel management staff.

The trip was wonderful as everyone experienced the culture, history, hospitality of the people, and the beautiful scenery. The choir's former director and accompanist Ian and Carolyn Woods, who now live in Switzerland, were instrumental in organizing and publicizing the concerts, and as well acted as tour guides and interpreters. The offerings taken at each concert went towards the local expenses and publicity costs.

If you are interested in participating in, or hosting a concert by the Ontario Presbyterian Choir, please contact Sheila at oandsbailey@sympatico.ca or 905-513-7918.

Katherine Allen is the WMS Administrative Assistant, Glad Tidings *Circulation Manager, and an active member of the Ontario Presbyterian Chorus.*

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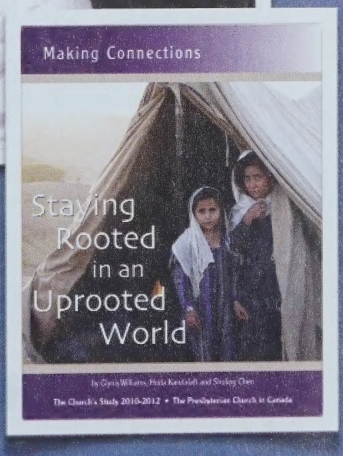

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his study looks at what scripture has to say about people who are unjustly uprooted nd the reality many people face today. You will explore God's call to both welcome the stranger and address the underlying causes that force people to be uprooted.

Mission partnership...

Indian Youth visit Canadian Friends for CY09

By Aisling Boomgaardt and Lindsey Hepburn-Aley, YIM 2008 India Participants

When mission is done in partnership, it truly lights the world up with God's presence. This was the feeling surrounding the visit of four youth from the Vindhya-Satpura mountain range in India this summer for Canada Youth 2009.

The four youth, Roby Tomar, Jaklina Parmer, Deepak Baghel, and Deepika Tomar, were all members of the youth group that had welcomed our Youth in Mission group to North India in the summer of 2008.

It was by God's grace that the four were able to obtain visas to be able to come to Canada Youth 2009. This was the first time that any of them had ever travelled outside of India, and getting the visas required getting passports, permission from their employers, showing financial support and convincing the immigration officials that they would indeed return to India, a process which started over seven months before they arrived.

So we were all thrilled when the four arrived two weeks before the start of the conference. They were hosted by participants in last year's YIM trip; including Aisling Boomgaardt, Sara McIlveen, Liz Brewer, and Diane Boys; and by families and congregations that have made connections with the people in their area through other contacts. This was truly an amazing way for Canadians to return the hospitality that was given to all of us when we visited India.

The Indian youth were very shy when they first arrived, quietly absorbing everything in their surroundings. On their first full day in Canada, we strolled through downtown Ottawa, taking pictures of absolutely everything, even the flowers and fruits. They were surprised by the size of the vegetables and fruits, as well as by the different colours. As we were looking at the view from behind the Parliament Buildings, Roby, one of the Indian Youth leaders turned to me and said that he had never seen such tall buildings before. His comment reminded us of how we had felt in India: excited to see so many new and interesting things!

We had a planned itinerary packed with activities: barbeques, road hockey, and visits to hospitals, schools and supermarkets. One day we spent the afternoon at Camp Gracefield, connecting with God in nature together. The Indian youth paddled a canoe for the first time ever, and got the hang of it really quickly!

By the time they arrived at Canada Youth they were much more comfortable being in Canada and ready to discover a whole new side of Canada—Presbyterian youth!

At Canada Youth 2009 they were embraced by Canadian young people. They played, and sang, and stayed up late together. The Indian youth were eager to participate fully in the Mission Branch, working together with their Canadian counterparts on the variety of activities set for the week. On the last night at worship, the Indian youth sang a traditional song from the Bhil region, thrilling the Canadian youth participants who gave them a standing ovation. The Indian youth were overwhelmed by the expression of solidarity and the sense of belonging.

The traditional Indian music and lively worship services moved us to action one year ago when we came home after visiting North India, and so it was no surprise that their experiences in Canada inspired them as well. They stayed up late into the night, discussing how they would change the Church and youth activities back home in North India. They wanted a camp like Gracefield for young people; they wanted to change Sunday school so that it occurs concurrently with the sermon on Sundays.

This is how the partnership of The Presbyterian Church in Canada carries on with the people of the Vindhya-Satupura mountain range: through exchanges, friendship, and solidarity. At the conclusion of the YIM India Trip last year, one of the Canadian participants commented that "the past parent/child relationship of the PCC to the Vindya-Satpura region has been transformed through this experience to a sister/sister relationship. It has really been a practice of strengthening partnership, letting them know that even though our (PCC) relationship with that region is not the same as it was, we are still right here praying with them." The visit of the Indian Youth to Canada this summer was truly an example of how we can continue to work together in mission by building up our partnerships, strengthening our friendships, and working together in a spirit of solidarity.

The group stopping in Ottawa to point at Jobat, India. From left to right: Lindsey Hepburn-Aley, Liz Brewer, Abishek (Roby) Tomar, Deepika Tomar, Jaklina Parmar, Sara McIlveen, Deepak Baghel, Aisling Boomgaardt

Adventures for

Advent

by Alexis McKeown

I rediscovered the moon yesterday. My 18-month son, Nathan, and I were out walking the dog enjoying what is probably the last of the warmer weather. Although it was still light out, hanging low in the sky was the moon. I hadn't even noticed it until I heard "Oooh!" I looked down at the stroller and saw a small pudgy figure pointing to the sky. We spent the better part of that walk looking for the moon. It was in front of us, behind us, at our side, hiding behind house roofs, and peeking through trees. It was a joy watching Nathan search for this new found wonder. I think for the first time in my life, I find myself anxiously waiting for the days to get shorter so that I can enjoy his reaction to a sky full of stars.

At work I often spend time looking ahead to the next church season. This year I am taking that planning and applying it to my home life. I am waiting in anticipation and preparing for the Advent season. I am not shopping early so that I can get Christmas presents for family and friends. I am not going to extra choir practices to prepare for Christmas concerts. I am not looking through holiday magazines to find new decorating ideas. I am not dusting off the baking utensils stored for the year. What I am doing is preparing to experience Advent through the eyes of a toddler. From before Advent begins until after Epiphany finishes, many of us fly from one planning meeting, event, party, or mall to the next. We read our Sunday litanies and say, 'Yes I know what the hope, love, joy, and peace of the advent season means'. Then Sunday evening arrives and we are again caught up in the hustle and bustle of the season.

I readily admit that I look forward to the lights, the music, and the general good cheer of Christmas with a spirit of expectation and anticipation. I enjoy seeing my house being transformed by decorations, gift-wrapping supplies, and presents. However, I want Advent to become more than a countdown to Christmas morning and Christmas dinner. Nathan's willingness to see everything as a new adventure or experience has inspired me to reflect on how I view Christmas in my heart. I don't think there is a right way, a wrong way, a more Christian way, or even a best way to honour the season of Advent. I just know that this year I want to refocus my feelings of excitement and anticipation towards the wonder of the coming of the Lord, both his birth and promise to come again. I want to prepare and wait to see what new possibilities are born from the hope, peace, joy, and love of Advent.

Alexis McKeown is Program and Marketing Coordinator for the WMS, and mother of Nathan.

The Gift of Time

We often talk about how celebrating Christmas has become such a drain on our time and energy that I hesitate to make the suggestion that is on my mind. But, even if it isn't easy to hear, I still want to say it: there is nothing more valuable that we can give to the younger generations than our time. Especially in the busy Christmas season, time spent with grandchildren, neighbours, or the children of our congregations is a gift that will be remembered long after the toys have been broken, the T-shirts outgrown, or the latest video games have become passé.

We all have memories of time spent with family or friends creating Christmas traditions that make the celebration special. I remember talking with my friend Joan one year, about things we were doing in the weeks before Christmas. She told me about her commitment to spend an afternoon with a family of former neighbours. When the children were young, and they lived next door, my friend had invited her neighbour to leave the children with her for a few hours, while they built a gingerbread house. It was my friend's gift to her neighbour: an afternoon to shop, or clean, or take care of any of the innumerable errands that had built up. Joan smiled as she told me that it was a gift that was at least as much fun to give as it was to receive.

It was a number of years earlier that Joan had moved out of that neighbourhood, but she explained that even though these children were well past the age when her own children had outgrown the tradition, these family friends still made contact every year to arrange their afternoon with her. The houses they built were now more elaborate; there was less candy consumed during the building; and they didn't really, in any way, need Joan to help them make a gingerbread house. But all of them felt strongly that they wanted to keep the tradition going. They wanted to spend an afternoon together, preparing for Christmas.

I understand those young people, and their desire to hold on to a tradition for as long as they could. I know that it wasn't really about needing a gingerbread house to celebrate Christmas. It was about sharing the gift of time.

There are lots of ways to spend time with children in the Christmas season. Baking is always popular. No matter how fancy the decorations are on the Christmas cookies sold in the supermarket bakery, none of them taste as good as home-made shortbread decorated with love.

Doing crafts is another way to share time with children, and crafts also give us the chance to talk about our understanding of the meaning of Christmas. I have provided ideas for a few simple crafts that you could make with children. The suggestions here have some connection to a symbol of the true Christmas story, offering an opportunity to remind children of the 'reason for the season'. The Internet has

thousands of other craft suggestions, many of which are free. If you're not confident about searching for them yourself, any child over about 10 years old will be glad to help, or teach you!

Whoever you invite, and whatever crafts or other activities you do, my suggestion is that you make this a special time. The smell of cookies baking (even if they are just Pillsbury dough dropped on the cookie sheet) will add a layer to the memory you will create. Playing music in the background will help set the mood. Enjoy the time. Be open to the creativity and inquisitiveness of the young minds. Be ready to listen. Keep a prayer in your heart. As you share the gift of time with a young person, celebrate the gift of the babe who came and changed the world.

Christmas Trees

There is some debate about the origin of the Christmas tree, but there is general agreement among Christians that the evergreen tree is a symbol of Christmas because of the association with the new life of the baby Jesus and the life everlasting (heaven) that Jesus offers us.

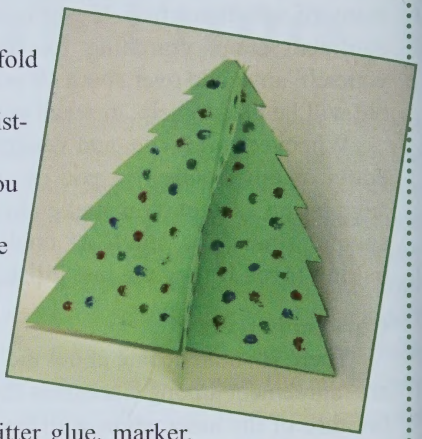
Many of the decorations on Christmas trees are used to draw attention to the Light of the World, whose birth we celebrate. We use real lights (originally candles, though most of us choose the safety of electric lights these days) when we decorate our trees. We use shiny things to reflect the light (most of the first glass balls hung on trees were covered with metallic paint) so I have used glitter glue for many of these tree crafts.

Pipe cleaner tree

- Take one green pipe cleaner.
- Slide beads along it, spacing them increasingly far apart.
- Put one bead on the end, tuck a piece of ribbon or yarn under the bead, and wrap the pipe cleaner around it.
- Make the first bend 0.5 cm after the first bead.
- Make another bend about 2.5 cm along.
- Increase the distance between the bends, so that you end up with a zig-zagged line with beads spread out on it.
- The last bend should be about half-way across the bottom of the tree. Point this section down to look like the tree trunk.

More craft ideas can be found at www.wmspcc.ca/gladtidingsA/gladtidings.html

Paper cross tree



- Take a green piece of paper and cut it in half.
- Place the two pieces on top of each other, and fold length-wise.
- Draw the jagged edge of the 'traditional' Christmas tree form down one side.
- Keeping the fold in place, cut out the tree. You will now have two flat tree shapes.
- Find the middle point of the height of the tree (with a ruler or by gently bending in half).
- On one shape, make a slit from the bottom to the mid-point.
- On the other shape, make the slit from the top to the middle point.
- Decorate both sides of both shapes with glitter glue, marker, crayon, or whatever you have available.
- When dry, slide the two shapes together. Your tree will now stand alone.

Birds

There is a belief that in one of the original Christian Christmas trees used in Germany, there was a bird nestled among the branches. The dove is also a well-recognized symbol of the Holy Spirit, and a symbol of peace. Either association is a natural connection to Jesus—the Prince of Peace—who received the Holy Spirit at his baptism.

The 3-D birds shown here are easy to make. You can draw your own body outline, or visit the WMS website and click on the link to 'Christmas Craft Templates' and print the outlines there.

- To make the wings, cut a piece of paper (matching or contrasting the paper you use for the bird) about 8 cm for the songbird shape or 14 cm for the dove shape.
- Fold the paper accordion style.
- Make a slit in the body of the bird just the width of your folded paper.
- Slide the paper through the body, and spread the pleated paper.
- Punch a hole in the body and thread a piece of ribbon or yarn through to make a hanger.

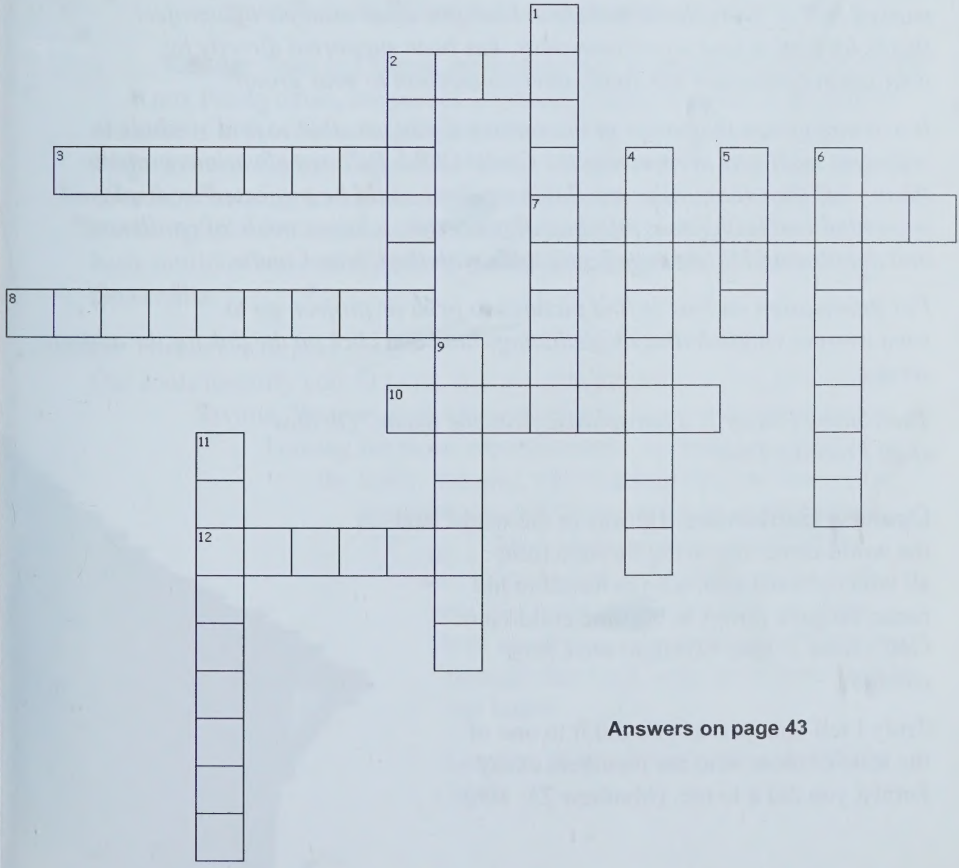
Advent Characters

Across

2. He was born before Jesus
3. He was Emperor
7. She said "Blessed are you among women"
8. He couldn't speak
10. He was first to speak of Jesus' birth
12. He foretold the birth of the Prince of Peace

Down

1. He had a full house
2. He listened to a nocturnal angel
4. He was afraid of the star
5. She said, "My soul magnifies the Lord"
6. Caspar, Balthasar and _____
9. He recorded the genealogy of Jesus
11. He was the governor of Syria



Answers on page 43

How Shall We Receive the Christ Child?

WMS Advent/Christmas Worship

by Rev. Helen Smith

*Please note that the projects and programs mentioned in this service by the readers and in the prayers, are examples only. In each place marked by *_____*, please include at least one other example of a project that is located in your own community, has been supported directly by your congregation, or has some other connection to your group.*

It will strengthen the power of the service if you are able to find symbols to represent each way of receiving the Christ Child. Pictures of various projects (from your own sources, or available on-line) could be projected or displayed, or symbolic objects (such as a bag of groceries, a house made of cardboard, and a doll) could be arranged on a table with the Christ Candle.

For information on how to find pictures to print or project, go to www.wmspcc.ca/gladtidingsA/gladtidings.html and click on the link for the advent service.

The Unison Prayer is a paraphrase from the hymn "Oh how shall I receive Thee?"

Opening Sentences: He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; . . . to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God. (John 1: 10a, 12) *(light the Christ candle).*

Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me. (Matthew 25: 40b)

Hymn: All earth is waiting (109)

Unison Prayer: As we prepare for the celebration of the birth of the Christ Child, we reflect on the ways we receive the child into our hearts and into our homes. How shall we receive you, O God? Kindle, Lord most holy, your light within us, so that we may do in humble spirit, all that pleases you. AMEN

Leader: How will we receive the Christ Child?

Reader One: ~~Luke~~ 1: 38a, 46–55

Leader: In the way of Mary, here we are, servants of the Lord, submissive to the Word that turns everything upside down.

Reader Two: In Ottawa, many churches, including St. Andrew's and Knox Presbyterian, are part of Daybreak Ecumenical Housing, whose mandate is to provide safe, affordable homes for limited-income single adults in need. Kairos Calgary in Alberta is involved in a project to provide affordable housing for families who are homeless. Denise Van Wissen works with the Fraternidad of Maya Presbyterials providing workshops on basic nutrition and healthy eating for the marginalized Maya people in Guatemala. *_____*

Reader Three: Let us pray.

Our souls magnify you, O Lord, and our spirits rejoice in you, O God, our Saviour. We pray with thanksgiving for those who are providing housing for those who have none, for programs that lift up the lowly. We pray with thanksgiving for Denise, for programs that fill the hungry with good things. *_____* Bless your servants, gracious God. Give them energy and enthusiasm for each new day. In this work in which we share, may we all sense the presence of Christ and through this work, may we receive him into our hearts.

Leader: How will we receive the Christ Child?

Reader One: Luke 19: 1–10

Leader: In the way of Zaccheus, here we are, repentant and hospitable.

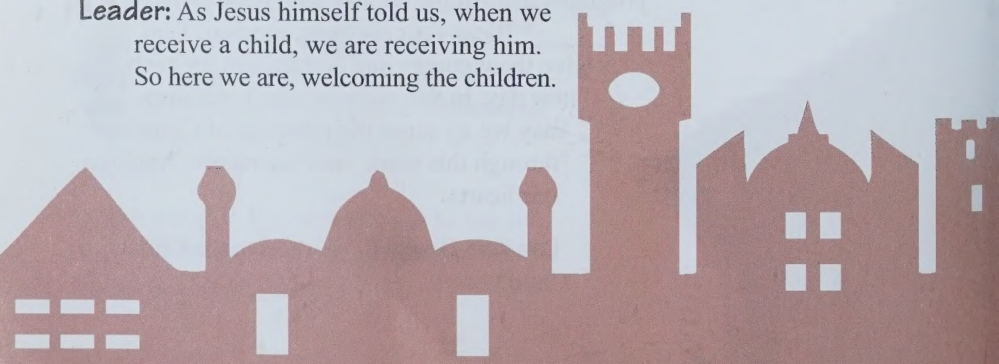
Reader Two: To repent is to turn our lives around just as Zaccheus did. We can shift the focus from ourselves and our own gain, to the very basic needs of others. Zaccheus welcomed Jesus into his home. Many of us are already involved in welcoming refugees to Canada. The Rev. Glynis Williams works with Action Réfugiés Montreal. Through refugee sponsorship, we can offer our hospitality and a safe place to live. Through language instruction groups we can help the stranger feel at home. Another project many of us may be involved in is providing hospitality and a warm place to sleep for people who are homeless through programs like Toronto's "Out of the Cold." *_____*

Reader Three: Let us pray. O God, we confess that often our world is too small. We welcome the familiar, the comfortable, the people who are like us, and we ignore the stranger. We fear the unknown, and hoard for ourselves what we have. Turn us around O God. May your inclusive love open our hearts. Remind us that when we welcome people who are powerless, people who have nowhere to lay their heads, people who have lost everything, we are welcoming you. We give you thanks for Glynis, for communities and individuals who work with people who are refugees, people who are without a home or food or a friend. *_____* Bless your servants, gracious God. Give them energy and enthusiasm for each new day. In this work in which we share, may we all sense the presence of Christ and through this work, may we receive him into our hearts.

Leader: How will we receive the Christ Child?

Reader One: Luke 9:46–48

Leader: As Jesus himself told us, when we receive a child, we are receiving him. So here we are, welcoming the children.



Reader Two: On a Presbyterian Youth In Mission project, in the summer of 2008, four young Canadian women journeyed to Ukraine, Hungary, and Croatia, and provided a number of camps for the children there. In Malawi, Linda Inglis works with the nursery schools for children whose parents have died of AIDS. Winnipeg Inner City Mission offers a comprehensive series of programs, celebrating life and teaching life skills, for children ages 1-14. *_____*

Reader Three: Let us pray. Gracious Jesus, you welcomed the children and gave them a place of honour and true greatness in your ministry. We give thanks for children and for the work of our church with children. We give you thanks for Youth in Mission, its work here in Canada and overseas, for Linda and her work with children who have been orphaned in Malawi, for the work of Flora House. *_____* Bless your servants, gracious God. Give them energy and enthusiasm for each new day. In this work in which we share, may we all sense the presence of Christ and through this work, may we receive him into our hearts.

Leader: How will we receive the Christ Child?

Unison Reading: I saw a stranger yestreen,
I put food in the eating place,
drink in the drinking place
music in the listening place,
and in the sacred name of
the Triune,
He blessed myself and my house,
my cattle and my dear ones,
and the lark said in her song
often, often, often
goes the Christ in the stranger's guise.

*Celtic Rune of Hospitality**

Offering: During the offering, the group is invited to sing verse 4 of hymn 145, beginning "What can I give him ...,"

Prayer of Dedication: Gracious God, as we receive you through welcoming the child, through showing hospitality, through the lifting up of the lowly and the feeding of the hungry, so we ask that you receive these, our gifts of thanksgiving, and use them to further those opportunities to welcome you into our lives. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

Hymn: Joy to the world (153)

Benediction: Go in peace, to receive the Christ in your heart in this season of his coming, and live to serve him with your life. And may grace, mercy and peace from the triune God rest and remain among us, now and always. Amen.

Reverend Helen Smith ministers in the inner city in Calgary, Alberta. When not busy with ministry, Helen enjoys walking the dog and spending time with her husband and three adult children.

Announcement

Welcome, Emily!

The WMS and *Glad Tidings* are pleased to celebrate the birth of Emily Lois Wood, born to Editor Colleen Wood and her husband John on August 18. Big brother, Ian, absolutely adores his new sister. John and Colleen are very pleased as well, and all are adjusting to life as a family of four! Congratulations!

In Memoriam

Georgine Caldwell, former PCC missionary who taught Christian Education at the Taiwan Theological College for 25 years, died on Aug 5, 2009, in Truro, NS. A funeral service was held for her in North Sydney, officiated by members of the Presbytery of Cape Breton.

Dr. Caldwell's service to the church was recognized in a Minute of Appreciation recorded in the Acts and Proceedings of the 116th General Assembly in 1990. The Minute spoke of her pioneering spirit, which was demonstrated through her design of a series of computer games that taught and tested Bible knowledge. Her selflessness was reflected in her final report to the church in which she said, "I am not of retirement age yet, but I need not hold on to the leadership position for which I have trained others." Colleagues from the Taiwanese church said of her, "Her dignity and dedication have marked her as a very special person in the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan family . . . Her influence will continue to run like a deep stream through the life of the PCT."

We give thanks for her life of service, and pray for the family and friends who mourn her death.

Ruth Richards, long time WMS member, former President of the Alberta and NW Synodical, and member of Council Executive, passed away in her 91st year. Ruth was passionate about her farm, her family, and her church. She was an elder in Chalmers, Penhold and after the closure of the church attended St Andrews, Red Deer.

Ruth had the gift of hospitality and was known for her catering and baking skills—especially her apple pies! She is survived by her son Ralph, daughter Joanne, four grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. She will be sadly missed.

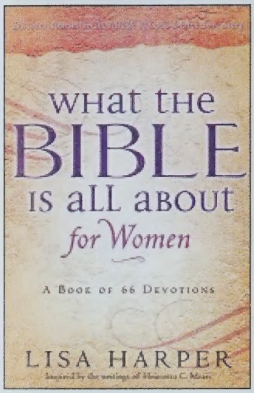
Molly Doka, life-time supporter of WMS who held several positions in local, Presbyterial, and Synodical died recently. She was an inspiration to all she met, working tirelessly until shortly before her death. She held the position of secretary for our group, collected pennies to send to Malawi, and trimmed stamps for the Canadian Bible Society. She was able to greet the Hungarian members of the church, and was active with her husband, the late Reverend Cal Doka, in helping many Hungarian immigrants adjust to life in Canada. The Hungarian Blessing in

continued on page 33

Book Reviews

What the Bible is All About for Women
By Lisa Harper

This is a devotional book featuring some of the writings of renowned Bible teacher Henrietta Mears. The author focuses on one book of the Bible at a time, providing an introductory story, a broad theme explained in a short text, highlights of the book, questions to consider as you study, and suggested movies to watch that are meant to take "something familiar in culture, and point it back to our Creator."

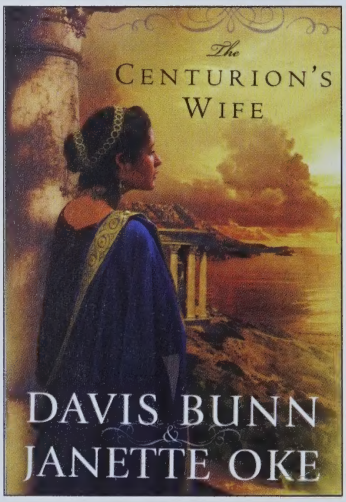


Harper's approach is straightforward and honest as she targets unbelievers and points them in the direction of God. I like the idea of taking one book at a time, and going through the entire Bible. Anyone unfamiliar with the writings of Henrietta Mears will appreciate Harper's introduction to a woman whose mission was to help Christians understand how scripture points us to Jesus. The presentation of the two perspectives (Mears' and Harper's) adds depth to the book, and makes it even more thought-provoking.

I would recommend this book as a good Bible study because of its rich format, but would add that some of the language in the introductory stories may be offensive to some readers. The author does suggest that readers use their own discretion in viewing the suggested movie clips, but it is good to remember that she is trying to reach unbelievers. It can be very helpful to know what is in the popular culture, and how we can help others find God in it.

Reviewed by Cheryl Steeper

The Centurion's Wife
By Davis Bunn, Janette Oke



In their rendition of the story of the birth of Christianity, the authors use the ancient Judean way of teaching, which is to show that actions most often speak louder than words. The content is rich in the way of life in the 1st century, well researched, and very interesting indeed.

The Centurion's Wife is a love story;

one that goes well beyond the union of a woman of Judean-Roman descent betrothed to a Roman soldier. It tells of the love of God, who sends us the gift of his son, Jesus, and then it goes on to expand the theme through the Centurion Alban, who is love personified.

Alban teaches us to "love your enemy" and demonstrates his conviction by giving prisoners water to drink before questioning them—a practice of kindness unheard of at the time. He demonstrates the ultimate sacrifice of love, when he gives Jacob the freedom to choose the life that he truly wants to live. There are many other fine examples of Alban's teaching by action that you will recognize as you read.

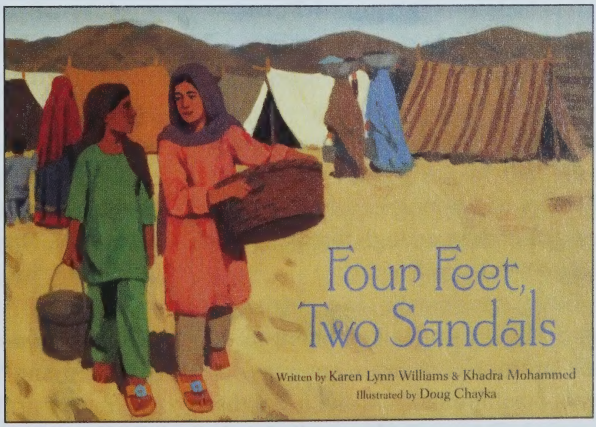
As far as the deep, abiding love between Alban and Leah goes, Romans 8:28 sums it up appropriately: "And we know that in all things, God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

I would recommend this book as a perfect introduction to those of you who have yet to discover the wide and varied selection of historical Christian fiction. To those who are well-versed in the subject, I recommend it because of the captivating way in which it brings an ages-old story back to life.

Reviewed by Cheryl Steeper

Children's Books

Four Feet, Two Sandals
by Karen Williams and Khadra Mohammed; illustrations by Doug Chayka



According to the statistics on age and refugees that are available from the UNHCR, 45 per cent of refugees are children under the age of 18. Eleven per cent are under the age of five. *Four Feet, Two Sandals* is a children's book which tells the story of two such children.

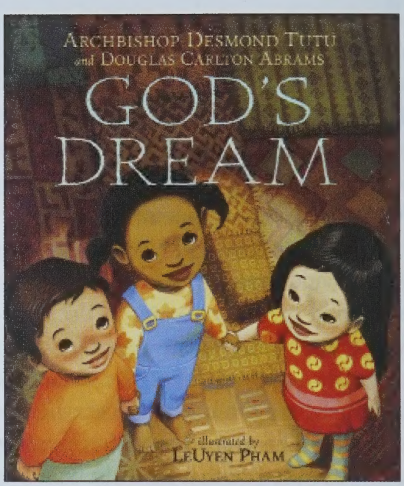
The story is set in Peshawar, the refugee camp in Pakistan. Two girls meet when they both find one sandal of a pair from the clothing brought to the camp by relief workers. The girls become friends and decide to share the sandals by alternating days. In the blooming friendship we are shown

how these children live their daily lives —we are given an indication of what these girls endured before arriving at the camp; and we realize the losses they have suffered (mostly in terms of family members).

Introducing a topic such as refugees to children can be difficult. *Four Feet, Two Sandals*, is a great resource for this purpose because it addresses these issues without being too intense. It is written from a child's perspective, which allows us to deal with an issue important in society, without being frightening for children.

As our church studies the issues of refugees, through the adult study and the Learning/Sharing project, *Four Feet, Two Sandals*, can be an excellent supplementary resource for everyone.

Reviewed by Amy Fonseca



God's Dream
by Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Douglas Carlton Abrams; illustrations by LeUyen Pham

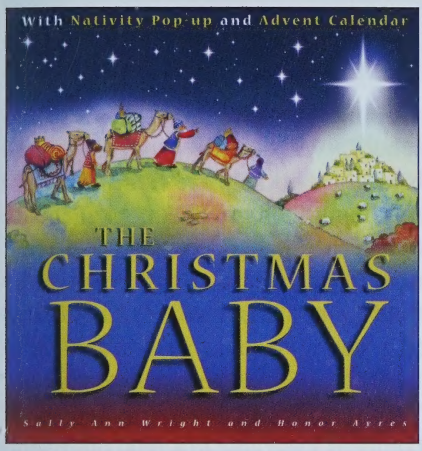
This is a beautiful book—both in appearance and in content.The language of the text makes it suitable for pre-schoolers and young children, but the message is deep enough that people of all ages can learn from it.

Everyone dreams, and not just at night. The dreams talked about in the book are our conscious dreams—the dreams that are more of the heart than the mind. Tutu and Abrams invite the reader to "close your eyes and look with your heart" where we find sharing, respect, and inclusivity. They address the human need for repentance and confession, and the joy of reconciliation.

For children who live in diverse neighbourhoods, this book can help them see God in everyone they meet. For children who live in communities that are more homogeneous, this book is a wonderful introduction to the variety of people who are all God's children. The words in the book are reinforced by the illustrations that include representations of every race and creed. We are all made in the image of God, and we all need to be reminded to see past our differences to our common humanity. This book calls everyone who reads it to "help God's dream come true."

The Christmas Baby
by Sally Ann Wright and Honor Ayres

I was grateful for the picture on the cover of this book. It corrected the misconception I had when I saw the title on the spine. The Christmas Baby sounded to me like one of those 'something



special happens in the modern age to remind us of Christmas' books. The cover illustration of the wise men following the star toward Bethlehem took me into the book. What I found was a simple but complete retelling of the story, beginning with the annunciation and Mary's visit to Elizabeth, through Jesus' birth in the stable, to the conclusion of the Christmas story when the wise men finally find Jesus at a house in Bethlehem.

With a lovely pop-up nativity scene attached to the back cover, the book could be set up on a coffee table or a deep window sill as part of your Christmas decorations. This book would be a lovely Christmas gift, but an even better advent gift. At $10.50, it is a great resource to help young children learn what Christmas is really about.

In Memoriam
continued from page 29

"The Presbyterian Message" would sum up her faith:
Where there is faith, there is love,
Where there is love, there is peace.
Where there is peace, there are blessings.
Where there are blessings, there is God.
Where there is God, there is no need!

Charlotte Duke, recently of Port Carling, ON, formerly of Seaforth and London, died on June 19, 2009. Wife and partner of Rev. Thomas Duke, Charlotte served the church and the WMS throughout their long ministry. In London, the CGIT Council and the Knollwood Park group benefitted from her energy and commitment. While in Seaforth, Charlotte served as Youth Secretary for the Synod of South Western Ontario. The Port Carling WMS gained from Charlotte's dedicated service, growing into a strong and active group. Charlotte was a 'small but mighty woman' who had a keen interest in young people and the mission work of the PCC. With her husband and her many friends, we give thanks for Charlotte's service to the church, and pray for comfort for those who mourn.

WMS PCC THE Book Room

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Mission in Action

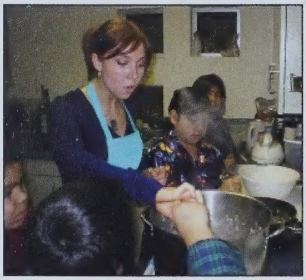
Rev. Margaret Mullin
Executive Director
Winnipeg Inner City Missions

Hello to All Friends of Mission,

As many of you know, Winnipeg Inner City Missions operates Flora House [FH], Anishinabe Fellowship Centre [AFC], and Anishinabe Place of Hope–Endaayaang [APOH], all in the inner city of Winnipeg, Manitoba. Our facilities are located in what is said to be one of the toughest neighbourhoods in Canada. The community is also one of the poorest in the country. Winnipeg is often listed as the murder capital of Canada and the car theft capital of Canada. There are several opposing street gangs in existence in Winnipeg, including a chapter of the Hell's Angels. The level of exploitation and violence on our streets is escalating.

At Flora House we continue to focus our programs and services around children and youth in the 1–14 age group. Everything we do is aimed at encouraging early learning and keeping our kids at grade level in school. We operate a weekly food bank there to help the families of the neighbourhood provide more adequate nutrition for their children. We were excited to see one of our teens on the front cover of the Sep/Oct *Glad Tidings* (the young woman in the dark blue 'hoody'). Her experience at Canada Youth 2009 was exceptional. Two of our teens were able to attend this event. Neither their families nor our Anishinabe church community could afford to help them with the registration and travel fees for the conference. However, through the generosity of Presbytery, Synod, local churches, and individuals interested in giving our teens equal opportunity to experience this conference, they were able to go.

At AFC, we operate a thrift store where everything sells for 25 cents. The minimal charge offers the dignity of shopping and purchasing and helps with the lighting and heating bills. Our "it's about time" AA group meets at AFC on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday.



The founder and leader of the group 'Gordon' has lived in the neighbourhood, participated in our programs in his youth, volunteered at AFC as an adult, and been a member of our Board of Directors. His life story also includes a chequered youth, addictions, and street gang involvement. He has been sober for the last 20 years and has a passion now for 'cleaning up' his neighbourhood.

Through our community drop in at APOH, we distribute emergency food, personal hygiene supplies, and bedding, towels, etc. free of charge. Providing for people's basic survival needs puts us in contact with many people in need. As we get to know them, and they learn to trust us over time, we get invited into their lives. Our professional staff can then begin the long-term work of advocating, referring, counselling, and supporting families and individuals as they faithfully struggle to improve their lot in life.

At APOH we operate a First Steps to Employment program for single adults aged 30–50. Successful candidates for the program are moved into our 20-unit Transitional Housing Project where they live in a safe, sober, clean environment while they do the work—school, training programs, employment preparation programs, etc.—that will lead to permanent employment. After only two years (APOH opened its doors on Sep. 15, 2007), we are still learning how to best help those who have been chronically unemployed, under-educated, and are disadvantaged in the work market.

For those individuals, churches, and church groups that contribute toward the considerable financial needs of our mission, a deeply felt thank you accompanies this letter. Please visit our website at www.wicm.ca, and pray for our staff and for the people who access our services.

Shona Blatch
Tanzania
July 2009

I have been here now for six months! Since this is my final newsletter, I thought I would describe a typical day living in Dar es Salaam.

I leave my house around 8:30 a.m., locking the iron-grated door behind me. As I step out of the house, I greet our guard in Swahili, all the while thinking 'It's too early to think in a second language'. I then leave through the seven-foot iron gate that helps secure our walled compound. I walk along a bumpy dirt road, dodging massive puddles if it has been raining. I round the corner to commence a series of greetings. First, I greet a very grown-up ten-year-old boy selling charcoal. 'Mambo', I say. 'Safi', he replies. I walk a bit further and am bombarded by little children practising their English on me. "Hello-how-are-you?-I-am-fine" streams from their lips all in one breath. A little further I walk and some more children call out "Mzungu!

Overseas Staff Birthdays

January

5 - Aron Csaba Pandy-Szekers, Hungary
6 - Anne Szabo Pandy-Szekers, Hungary
10 - David Pandy-Szekers, Hungary
11 - Nico William Hoekstra, Malawi

Mzungu!" (White person! White person!). I utter a greeting and continue on my way. Now I follow a narrow path through a small grassy field on which I must sometimes move cattle in order to pass by. Then I carefully cross a creek by walking over a fallen log and clamber up some rocks to the upper road. Now it's just a left and a right down a dirt road past the various chickens, cows, and banana trees until I come to the main road. Next comes the dangerous part. I attempt to walk down the road to the office without falling into the deep cement ditch or being hit by any of the quickly moving vehicles or bicycles which are using the left side of the road. When I catch a break in the traffic, I cross the road and stroll up to the big office gate. The guard opens the gate to let me enter, resulting in another round of greetings. In that last stretch, I walk down the hall of the office, greeting any of my colleagues that I meet and finally collapse at my desk, hot and sticky and worn out from the mental exercise of greeting everyone in Swahili.

I check my e-mails and begin entering data from our surveys in rural areas. Before I know it, it's chai time (tea break). I walk upstairs to the balcony where all of my colleagues are chatting and sipping some tea or coffee. Sometimes at this time we will have an office meeting or prayer time. Often, we find ourselves comparing our cultures since we are all from different countries. Then it's back to work for the rest of the day. Too often by around 2:00 p.m.,

Shona's walk to work.

my computer will overheat and shut down. By this time the Internet or electricity has probably been out a couple of times anyway, always eliciting some comment about the unreliability of both and a questioning of how long it will be off this time.

At 5:00 p.m., I prepare myself for the walk home. I must acknowledge the people I pass all over again but this time with evening greetings. I remind myself that I must correct the children's "Good morning!" greetings and not just automatically respond "Good morning" since it is evening. And so I begin, past the guard, through the gate, down the busy road, down the dirt roads, down the rocks, over the creek, through the field, past the children shouting "Mzungu!" (They really should be used to me by now.) This time I'll stop by the little fruit and vegetable duka (shop) to pick up some fresh food for supper, and then I continue on down the road until I come to my home. One final greeting to the guard and I'm home at last. Once I take the padlock off the door and open all of the other locks, I open the door to see a sparkling house with dishes cleaned and put away, laundry folded, and floors mopped, thanks to our househelp. I cook up the vegetables that I just bought for dinner and spend the evening relaxing. No television or Internet at the house means I usually go to bed rather early, so I'm ready to start the same thing all over again the next day.

I doubt I will be able to maintain such good habits when I return to Canada next week as I will be returning to the life of a student. At the end of August, I will be moving to Montreal where I will begin a two year Masters' program at McGill University. I thank you all so much for making this trip possible through your prayers and support. It has been such a blessing to be here.

(Shona worked with Wycliffe Partners in Bible Translation on a six-month placement. The national WMS provided a grant to assist with the costs of this experience.)

Presbyterial

On May 7, 2009 **London Presbyterial** ladies met at the Backus-Page House Museum near Wallacetown for their annual May Retreat. The theme for the day was "Together We Can." Mary Lou MacKay, President of London Presbyterial, opened the day with a Helen Steiner Rice poem entitled "Life's Purpose" and prayer followed. Joan Boyce, Adult Secretary, introduced the guest speaker Myeengun, a counselor from Chippewa-on-the-Thames band office. In 2006 and 2008 he had represented Aboriginal spirituality as a speaker for the World Religions Conference at the University of Waterloo. His topics for the morning were Aboriginal spirituality, Aboriginal traditions, and traditional medicines used for healing. He is working to preserve his culture and language as only 10 in his community are fluent in Ojibway. His own children "smudge" (which he explained to our group) and pray to their Creator every morning as a positive beginning to each day. To experience entering one of their longhouse lodges, he took us on a simulated journey and told us an Ojibway story of creation. We all became 'one in the spirit' as we gathered in a circle and passed an eagle feather. As each person held the feather, they said their name and shared thoughts and feelings about Myeengun's (which means wolf in Ojibway) presentation. Catherine McMillan then thanked our speaker.

A paper bag lunch was enjoyed on the museum grounds, after which some walked on the nature trails at John E Pearce Provincial Park while others toured the 1850 House Museum.

Heather Morton led a lively sing song to begin the afternoon session. President Mary Lou MacKay introduced the afternoon speaker, Nina Zwart from New St. James Presbyterian Church in London. She is the National Leader of Children and Worship and she introduced us to "Praying in Colour" by Sybil MacBeth. With paper and crayons, all began praying in colour using prayer icons and scripture texts. This was a new experience for most of us as we opened our hearts to God.

The day ended as we all repeated the Mizpah Benediction and headed for our homes after a relaxing and inspirational day.

Elaine Brown

The Annual Meeting of the **Barrie Presbyterial** took placed on Tuesday, May 26, at Elmvale Presbyterian Church. Our theme for the year is from 1 Cor 15:58b: "Be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord, your labour is not in vain." I believe we find encouragement in this as we see our numbers diminish through the years (about 30 per cent) but knowing that our hearts and minds are still dedicated to the work of the WMS.

Dorothy Ruddell, President, welcomed those present and constituted the meeting with prayer. The Opening Worship was that which had been presented by our Presbyterial at CNOB Synodical Annual meeting in April in Belleville with a dramatic presentation of Luke 8:42b–48—the story of the woman who was healed by touching the hem of Jesus' garment.

After reports were duly received and accepted we heard from delegates to Synodical and from Marle Schandlen and June Campbell who had attended the WMS May Annual Council Meeting at Crieff Hills. This was the completion of a six-year term for each of them.

Rev. Dr. Lynda Reid presented a report of her work as Education Consultant for the Synod of Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda. Rev Ann Blane had accompanied Lynda and was also heartily welcomed to our meeting as they both participated in a Tribute to the Order of Diaconal Ministries. Rev. Dr. Reid also conducted the Installation Service.

Our Annual Fall Day Apart was announced as being at Westminster Church, Barrie, with Catherine Brown as Facilitator on Saturday, October 3. The theme will be MP3—Music: Praise, Prayer and Practice.

Barb Summers, Communications Coordinator for Presbyterian World Service and Development was our enthusiastic and interesting presenter using PowerPoint to describe some of her adventures pertaining to the work of the PCC in Africa and India. We heartily recommend her to any group who may be seeking a speaker to learn more of our mission work.

West Toronto Presbyterial celebrated its 95th Annual Meeting at Morningside High Park Church on Saturday, May 2, 2009. The theme for

the day was *"I was a stranger and you welcomed me."* The meeting opened with devotions followed by the business section which included receiving all reports. The 2008 mission objective was reached and exceeded. Greetings were read from the Moderator of the Presbytery of West Toronto, along with a welcome from the host church.

Our guest speaker was Stephen Allen, Associate Secretary of Justice Ministries who, in the morning, shared with us his experiences of a mission trip to the US/Mexico border region. He helped us begin to understand the situations of undocumented migrants in the US, and those who come to Canada under the federally-sponsored program for migrant agricultural workers, as well as other border issues.

West Toronto Presbyterial presented Noreen Bowman with an Honorary Membership Certificate.

We enjoyed a delicious lunch and continued our meeting with Stephen Allen whose second presentation was about poverty: the trends, social exclusion, child poverty, etc. He challenged the WMS groups, and in turn our home congregations, to try and tackle the poverty in our own areas.

West Toronto Presbyterial chose Noreen Bowman, long-time Treasurer of Weston Church's WMS group, to receive the Honorary Membership which is given each year to a member who has done outstanding work in the Presbyterial.

Other business included the distribution of specially designed bookmarks commemorating the 95th annual meeting, several book reviews, and the election of officers. The closing worship encompassed an *"In Remembrance"* section as well as the installation of officers for 2009 and the Benediction.

Diane Osborne

Local

The June meeting of the **Orangeville WMS** was held at the home of Suzanne and John Rayburn. We had a delicious pot-luck lunch, on a beautiful day. Helen Sinclair was our chair person, and Helen had invited our minister, Rev. Harvey Self, to speak on his upcoming year as Moderator of the PCC. We will look forward to hearing all about his travels and experiences next year.

Rev. Don Sinclair opened the meeting with prayer, and we had a wonderful afternoon of fellowship and conversation. We concluded the

L to R: Betty Dobson, Josephine Gordon, Betty Douglas, Helen Sinclair, Rev Harvey Self, Helen Robson, Harriett Broeze, Joyce Palm, and Suzanne Rayburn of Orangeville WMS.

afternoon with prayer, being thankful for all the blessings we have received as a group, and look forward to our individual summer plans until we meet again in September.

Marilyn Taylor

What would you find on 'A Taste of Guatemala' sampling table? The women of **St. Andrew's WMS, Ottawa**, considered this question as Mission Sunday approached. Armed with recipes from the WMS study book and the Internet, they produced a splendid array of Guatemalan foods: fried plantains, blue corn chips, irresistible salsa, banana bread, drop sugar cookies, platters of tropical fruits, and 22 jars of home-made, triple-fruit marmalade—the gift of a friend.

Organizers set out a beautiful display of Mayan shawls, a woven Mayan table runner, and other resources including

St. Andrew's WMS, Ottawa

Guatemalan photos, and study book articles. A sign was posted explaining that all proceeds would go towards the education of Mayan children, and donation baskets were made available. After both services, people stopped by the table to taste, chat, and donate.

There was more. In what may have been a first for St. Andrew's, Dr. Andrew Johnston invited three WMS members to join him in reading the Mission sermon, written by the Revs. Donald W. and Marion Barclay MacKay. Knees may have wobbled but voices didn't. Comments after both services were positive.

Members hoped to use Mission Sunday to raise the WMS profile and to encourage donations towards the education of two Mayan children for one year. With the support of the Lord and help from church friends, the women managed to do just that—plus a little extra. Receipts from the event, with a small donation from the group, totalled $400—sufficient to send four Mayan children to school in Guatemala for one year.

Preparing to celebrate the 125th Anniversary of the WMS in October, Knox, North Easthope WMS President Lois Horne (left) presented a WMS Life Membership to Ann Wybrow at the Mission Awareness Service on April 26, 2009.

Corrections to Who and Where

Updated information has been received. Please make note of the following changes.

Synod of Central NE Ontario and Bermuda
Congregational Development Consultant
John-Peter Smit (New Address)
56 Thirty Third Street
Toronto, ON M8W 3H3

International Ministries
Nester Medina, Cuba and Clara Henderson, Malawi have completed their appointments.

Advent Characters Puzzle Answers from page 23

Across
2. John
3. Augustus
7. Elizabeth
8. Zechariah
10. Gabriel
12. Isaiah

Down
1. Innkeeper
2. Joseph
4. King Herod
5. Mary
6. Melchior
9. Matthew
11. Quirinius

Esson WMS, Oro presented life memberships to Marlene Morgan on June 3, 2009 and to Judy Johnston on July 8, 2009.

Judy Johnston:
Seventy-seven was the year
when Judy joined our gang.
At first she took on little jobs,
the hymns with us she sang.
More tasks she took on for the group;
As secretary, five.
(In Ladies' Aid was president)
then treasurer did strive.

When Judy has us to her home,
we're in for quite a treat.
she makes us puzzles then to try,
to solve is quite a treat.

She is so busy at her work
she misses meetings, some,
but when her schedule does permit,
we're happy she can come.

Marlene Morgan:
In ninety-seven Marlene joined.
We learned that she could play.
In ninety-eight an office took,
She soon was on her way.

As well as playing month by month,
Marlene rose to become
vice-president in two—oh-oh
and also two-oh-one

The next two years as president
went quickly flying by
(Then Ladies' Aid as treasurer
was what she next did try.)

For the past eight years in Christmas month
to Marlene's home we go.
And there some Christmas Carols we sing.
To her our thanks we owe.

ly Johnston and Lois Cullis (Secretary)

Jean Horne, (President), Marlene Morgan, Lois Cullis (Secretary)

On May 13, 2009, the Semper Fidelis group of the WMS, Knox, Agincourt, ON celebrated their 80th anniversary as an Auxiliary. After their regular meeting, Janet Muirhead gave a brief history of the group. As part of the celebrations, Joyce MacIsaac was presented with an Honorary Membership certificate and pin. Joyce then cut the anniversary cake and refreshments were enjoyed by all who were present.
Back: Marjorie Shorting, Catherine Dunlop, Marilyn Muirhead, Margaret McCullough
Front: Christina Innes, Catherine Thomson, Joyce MacIsaac, Violet Reid, Betty Melrose, Mary Story, and Agnes Thomson. (Photographer: Janet Muirhead)

Essa Road Presbyterian Church WMS in front of 'brick' display showing the number of bricks 'bought' by the congregation between Mission Awareness Sunday (April 26) and June 30, 1009. $2000 for India, Jobat.
L to R: June Campbell, Donna Stillwell, Olive Menary, Eva DeGorter, Anna Ayton, Jean Troop. Back: June Johnston, Doris Ryckman, Doris Durdin.

Forward in Faith

Did you know?

Earlier this summer, the Canada Youth '09 event took place in St. Catharines, ON at Brock University. The WMS supported a number of young participants who applied for a grant from the Children, Youth and Young Adult Mission Fund. The WMS contributed to the whole event by funding The Underground and a shuttle bus.

The Children, Youth and Young Adult Mission Fund also supports young people who apply for assistance to attend events such as Leadership Training. The Fund is intended "to provide financial assistance for children, youth, and young adults up to the age of 25, to participate in a Mission program. The fund is also available for young adults attending youth events that are programs sponsored by the Women's Missionary Society or The Presbyterian Church in Canada."

Youth are not the only ones who can benefit from WMS grants and receive financial support. There is a group of women who have recently returned from a Mission Exposure Trip to Malawi. Once again, individuals were eligible to receive a grant from the Giollo Kelly Leadership Development Fund. These grants are really an investment, since most women return from these trips full of excitement about what they've experienced and willing to share their knowledge and pictures with your Group, Presbyterial, or Synodical.

The Louise Reith Leadership Development Fund is available to Presbyterials and Synodicals looking for support for a special event.

These are just a few of the special funds that have been set up with money bequeathed to the WMS or donated in memory of women who had significant commitment to the WMS and the mission work of the church. By such bequests and donations, the donors hope that they can share the excitement, hope, and the love of God that they have felt, with others around the world.

Each of the Funds mentioned is accessed by application. Just e-mail, phone or write to the WMS Office at Wynford Drive and ask for a copy of the guidelines and application form that is appropriate for your situation. Be sure to apply at least six weeks prior to the event. Please know that part of the application process requires information about other sources of funding for the event, and each fund has limits to the grants that may be given.

May each of you have a blessed Christmas.
Janet Brewer

Circulation News

Katherine Allen

Our recent mailing to *Glad Tidings* secretaries/contact persons included the brochure *Ideas for Promotion*. One suggestion came to us from Cheryl Steeper: groups pay for one or two subscriptions per year to send to someone they know who might be interested, under the name of "your secret pal or sister." When it comes time to renew the subscriptions, invite these recipients to a potluck or something similar, and introduce them to the group. At an appropriate time, ask these recipients if they would consider paying for one or two subscriptions, to keep the momentum going. This is a perfect way to enjoy fun, fellowship, and promote the magazine.

With Christmas just around the corner, you can perhaps try this suggestion or buy a gift subscription to *Glad Tidings* for only $14.00 for six issues. Maybe a family member, youth leader, or shut-in might enjoy reading about the mission of the church. You can pay through the *Glad Tidings* secretary in your church or mail directly to our office addressed to the Circulation Manager. Promotion of the magazine is an ongoing process. *Glad Tidings* is for everyone to read, not just WMS groups.

Have you paid for your subscription to *Glad Tidings*? In order to have the changes/additions/deletions done for the January/February 2010 issue, we need to receive the subscription list by the November 1st deadline. If we receive this information by the deadline, we save time and money by not having to follow up.

Always remember, even if your group no longer meets, you can have an individual subscription or appoint a contact person in your congregation to follow up each year with subscriptions.

PASS ME ALONG:

Sharing the information and articles from *Glad Tidings* is a great way to remind people of the work of the WMS and the mission community that serves our church. When you have finished reading your copy, share:

- Book reviews of *Four Feet, Two Sandals* and *God's Dream* with a parent or grandparent (either of these books would be terrific Christmas gifts)
- Human Trafficking article with the Outreach or Mission Committee Convenor of your congregation
- Christmas Crafts with your church school co-ordinator
- Mission in Action with a senior high or university-aged student

Urgent Appeal for PWS&D

Dramatic drop in donations threatens programs with partners around the world

Please help today!

Presbyterian World Service & Development

www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd • 1-800-619-7301 ext. 291 • 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto ON M3C 1J7

IN REMEMBRANCE

Ilene Whyte
St. Andrew's, Arnprior, ON

Mrs. Olive Bell,
St. Andrew's, Barrie, ON

Mrs. Marion Wallace
St. Andrew's, Barrie, ON

Christine (Teeny) Dickieson
Knox, Guelph, ON

Elizabeth Garlisch
St. Andrew's, Carleton Place, ON

Mrs. Esther Burman
Margaret Taylor Evening Auxiliary
Knox, Burlington, ON

Joan Van Arkel
Friendship Auxiliary
St. Marys, ON

Mrs. Norah McCue
Armour Heights, (formerly Cooke's)
Toronto, ON

Jean Muir
Campbell-Afternoon Aux. WMS
Knox, Woodstock, ON
(Wife of the late Rev. Grant Muir, mother of Rev. Don Muir)

Mrs Dora Clarke
Knox, Horning's Mills, ON

Emma Patterson
St. Andrew's, Kitchener, ON

Names for In Remembrance can be sent by post or email. Please ensure names are typed or clearly written, and include your WMS group name (or congregation) and location.

Whoever said, "You can't have your cake and eat it too," never heard of Gift Annuities

Gift Annuities are a way you can make a gift to the church to support the ministry of your choice and in return receive a guaranteed annual income for life, the majority or all of the income tax-free. Sound too good to be true? Call the Planned Giving Office today to learn how you can have your cake and eat it too.

What flavour of ministry would you like to support?

A real life example:

In 1994, Giollo Kelly acquired a $10,000 gift annuity which she designated for the Presbyterian Church Building Corporation. When she died fifteen years later, Giollo had received nearly $11,000 (87% tax-free) in total payments and left a legacy of nearly $7,500 with the money remaining in her annuity account.

(The above example is for illustrative purposes only. Annuity rates and the residue available for disbursement vary.)

Planned Giving Office
The Presbyterian Church in Canada
1-800-619-7301,
plannedgiving@presbyterian.ca

PM40013283 R9517

Please report any errors/changes in address